REZOLUTION

:>a dark tomorrow_

SCIENCE FICTION MINIATURES COMBAT

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Acknowledgements Or Credit where Credits Due

What you now hold in your hands is the culmination of over two years of blood, sweat and tears by many talented and dedicated people. Rezolution breaks the mold and dares to be different in its design and its play; layering a rich ongoing story and an out of this world design, it invites the players to share in its evolution, because, after all, it's your game now. Everyone who worked on Rezolution played at the top of their game and went that extra step to produce what you hold in your hands. But there were those who went even further, forgoing sleep, their social lives and more, to deliver what we believe is a most unique and original game. First up, Joey Large, who beat this book into submission and saw many a dawn's early light while staring at its pages; Tony and Jane Kenealy, who have not only contributed, but helped guide and prod me along the way when I was lost, I thank them for their friendship and their patience; Rich Hansing for his expertise and advice on weaponry; Jason Liebrecht, René Lafargue and Anthony Richard for the hours spent playing, analyzing and helping with all things Rezolution; Ross Campbell, Eve and Jaime Jones going above and beyond the call of duty for their enthusiasm and input into the Rezolution universe; James Van Schaik who has consistently astounded us all with his craft and his dedication to the quality and originality of Aberrant Games miniatures; Scott Mosher and Andrew Taylor for being pushed to the limit and delivering perfection. For their friendship and advice on the way, we offer our sincere thanks to Mark Lanckham, Mike Noe and all at Iron Wind Metals. Thanks also to Adiken and to Worldworks Games. And last, but by no means least, our families, who have supported, indulged and accepted us, without you we're nothing.

Information wants to be free, but Freedom has a price...

Simon Mackenzie.

INTRODUCTION

WELCOME TO 2175

As much as things have changed, so they have stayed the same. The human race is still driven by greed and petty grievances while the earth is dying beneath their feet and you… well, you can either try to save it or save yourself, the choice is yours. Either way, people are going to try and stop you. But I know you are not going to let a little thing like a group of heavily armed killers get in your way — at least not for long.

So welcome to a Dark Tomorrow: a cosmos in conflict, riddled with conspiracies, backstabbing and private wars. Where the authorities struggle to keep order in a violent and cut-throat universe as they drown in misdirection and corruption from within.

While the Earth may be on her deathbed, the universe is just beginning to open up and the dream that began over two centuries earlier is now finally being realized. Pioneers stand proudly under alien suns, breathing clean unpolluted air for the first time in their lives and marveling at the wonders unfolding before them. While ‘back home’ the governments and corporations make plans for industrialization and the profits these new worlds would bring.

We stand poised at the brink, or rather teetering over the abyss; everything is about to change and the very survival of the human race hangs in the balance.

The tensions and violence that are continually bubbling below the surface are about to break through.

Ancient mysteries and deeply buried secrets are about to be revealed.

Peter Johnston

And the age old question of are we alone in the universe is answered… And we will wish it wasn't.

WELCOME… TO THE EVE OF THE LAST WAR.

Rezolution is a fast-paced cinematic strategy game. Let me say that again — strategy game — for this is not just a matter of lining up your models on either side of a field and the person who has the first go is the winner. Rezolution requires cunning and quick wits; the game is dynamic and the situation constantly changing — much like in a real battle situation. Again, Rezolution is not just about headcount as fortune favors the bold, but not the reckless. A solid strategy and good implementation combined with a little luck will enable the weakest troops to bring down the mightiest opponent. Rezolution is not just about brawn, but about brain because when you have both working in tandem you are unstoppable and nothing is out of your reach. When the times comes that you do want a full-on conflict, you will be surprised how fluid and vicious Rezolution is. There is no place for backseat drivers or armchair quarterbacks as this is a full contact sport with no padding attached. The models on the table may be your fists, but it is your mind and your tactics that will lead them to victory. Rezolution is about individuals working as a team, so every loss to your crew should be felt. This is not a game where an army of clones marches across a table and gets cut down in their droves — this is about characters. Characters that you should feel invested in because they are doing your bidding in these private wars and are ultimately your responsibility, whether they live or die on the tabletop. But, then again, if you are playing the Dravani you may see things from a slightly different perspective…

THE FACTIONS

So who are these Dravani and what of the other players in this deadly future?

THE CSO

The field arm of Unipol, the Central Security Organization, operates as the world's military and judiciary force, and its mandate covers everything from investigating corporate and street crime to keeping members safe from rogue nations. Though they often find themselves at odds with Unipol bureaucrats and face a conspiracy of corruption because there are those within the organization who would bury cases rather than risk losing their funding, they will sometimes take the law into their own hands to carry out justice.

APAC

Asia Pacific, the world's first incorporated state, blends honor and tradition with state-of-the-art technology. APAC not only dominates the world of business, but also the invisible conflicts that wage across the system. As one of the most targeted entities for espionage and sabotage, their forces are some of the largest and best equipped, while it is rumored their 'internal security force' is greater in number than the CSO's standing force.

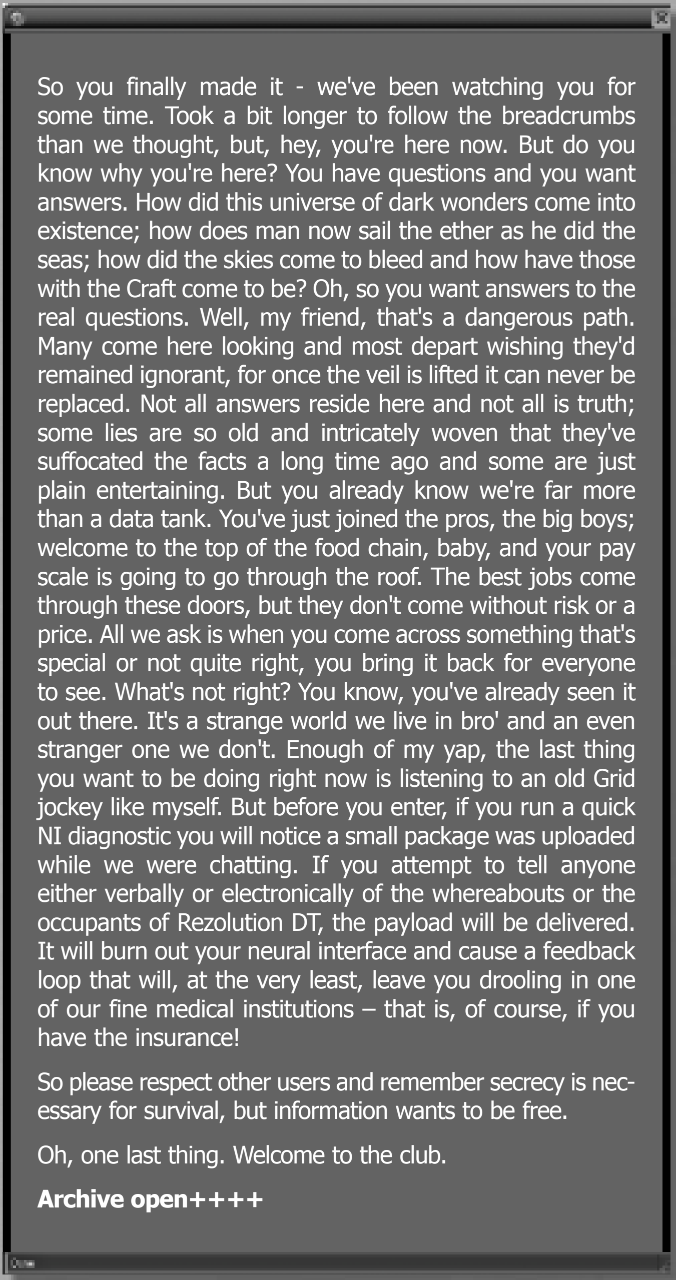
THE DRAVANI

The Dravani arrived on earth 'somewhat accidentally' centuries ago and have lived (and fed!) while disguising their true nature from man. Over the years they have built an empire but, though powerful, are still few compared to the billions swarming around them. They know humanity would not look kindly upon them, so they have adapted and used man against himself, as it can only be a matter of time before they are revealed to humanity.

THE RONIN

The Ronin are the third party: invisibles, blanks. They don't exist within the system and, therefore, make ideal operatives for those who wish to remain anonymous and avoid the wrath of the CSO, a government or a major corporation. Experts at their trade, and picked from the vicious street gangs that roam the outer cities, they are trained to become the ultimate operatives and combatants. Seen as modern day Robin Hoods by many, and as dangerous criminals and vigilantes by those in power and authority, the Ronin are yours to mold. You can assemble the force to your particular style of play and tactics as the Ronin are as individual as snowflakes with no two crews the same. Not only do they operate as an individual faction, but they can also be used as Mercs by the others.

But Rezolution isn't about faceless organizations, corporations and governments, it's about the individuals, it's about the men, women and 'bots' (as long as you have the correct paper work, they're sticklers for union regs!) on the front line, as well as some not so easily definable 'things'! This isn't a game of rank and file troops, nameless numbers to be ground under the wheels of war, Rezolution is



So you finally made it - we've been watching you for some time. Took a bit longer to follow the breadcrumbs than we thought, but, hey, you're here now. But do you know why you're here? You have questions and you want answers. How did this universe of dark wonders come into existence; how does man now sail the ether as he did the seas; how did the skies come to bleed and how have those with the Craft come to be? Oh, so you want answers to the real questions. Well, my friend, that's a dangerous path. Many come here looking and most depart wishing they'd remained ignorant, for once the veil is lifted it can never be replaced. Not all answers reside here and not all is truth; some lies are so old and intricately woven that they've suffocated the facts a long time ago and some are just plain entertaining. But you already know we're far more than a data tank. You've just joined the pros, the big boys; welcome to the top of the food chain, baby, and your pay scale is going to go through the roof. The best jobs come through these doors, but they don't come without risk or a price. All we ask is when you come across something that's special or not quite right, you bring it back for everyone to see. What's not right? You know, you've already seen it out there. It's a strange world we live in bro' and an even stranger one we don't. Enough of my yap, the last thing you want to be doing right now is listening to an old Grid jockey like myself. But before you enter, if you run a quick NI diagnostic you will notice a small package was uploaded while we were chatting. If you attempt to tell anyone either verbally or electronically of the whereabouts or the occupants of Rezolution DT, the payload will be delivered. It will burn out your neural interface and cause a feedback loop that will, at the very least, leave you drooling in one of our fine medical institutions – that is, of course, if you have the insurance!

So please respect other users and remember secrecy is necessary for survival, but information wants to be free.

Oh, one last thing. Welcome to the club.

Archive open++++

about unique and highly skilled characters operating in small elite teams, where casualties are always an unacceptable loss. Rezolution is about the team and putting together the specialists with the right blend of skills needed for the job at hand. From combat experts to the psychic powers of the Craft users, not to mention one of the most essential elements of any team, those with skills to hack enemy defenses and take the battle into the virtual realms of the Grid. Rezolution is a team effort and each faction offers you a vast variety of different elements that can be combined to form a winning combination. Full details on the forces available to you can be found in the Factions section of this rulebook.

STOP ME IF YOU'VE HEARD THIS BEFORE...

So what exactly is a science fiction, miniatures combat game? Well, I am glad you asked, although, hopefully, the science fiction part does not need any explanation, as sci-fi has become part of our culture and daily lexicon. 'Miniatures combat' however, may need further explaining in this world of virtual entertainment, where some of the most popular video games are RTS (Real Time Strategy) and Shooters (first/third person shooters). These are the electronic offspring of the wargame, but the origins of these games go back far beyond the microprocessor to an age when man moved strangely carved pieces around a table that represented a far-off battlefield — this is known as a wargame! One of my friends, at the time a new convert to the hobby, succinctly described it as "chess with guns" referring to the tiny replicas on the playing pieces or miniatures you use. Today, even though we are surrounded by fantastic electronic worlds, miniature wargames are more popular than ever and the hobby is growing every year. There are many reasons why...

Competitive Play: yeah we all like to win! Rezolution pits you against your opponent like no miniatures game before in a tense, simultaneous, tactical battle. Rezolution will not only test your tactics, but your nerve, as it is a game of continuous plays and counter plays. It begins, even before you even hit the table, with the strategy to build your crew for different opponents and assignments. Remember, however, you could not play Rezolution without your opponent, so sportsmanship and a good sense of humor are essential whether you win or lose.

The Tangible Aspect: in Rezolution you actually have beautifully crafted metal miniatures that represent your forces on the table and, if you are adventurous, you can also build your own terrain for them to fight across to complete the illusion. There is nothing quite like seeing a battle laid out in front of you across your tabletop or game board. Once you have chosen which faction you want to play, the best way to start collecting Rezolution miniatures is with a starter set which contains the core elements of a faction. You can then add to this to develop your force from the growing selection available from *Aberrant Games*. This will enable you to play larger scale games and also give you more tactical options as each figure has a unique set of abilities and weapons.

The Craft: as most wargame players will tell you, part of the joy of the hobby is the time spent painting and modeling your forces, making them an extension of your personality by your skill with the brush. Many players find this part of the hobby as much fun as actually playing the game and Rezolution encourages creativity with the amazing variety of models. The only limit to what you can do is the limit of your imagination and, even if you have never painted anything since elementary school, you will be amazed how easy it is to get a great looking figure by following a few simple rules. We give a primer course later in this book to help get you on your way.

The Social Factor: in order to enjoy Rezolution, you have to actually sit in the same room and communicate with other human beings, face to face. You will also want to seek out new opponents in order to test your forces against them and your local game store is an ideal place to find new Rezolution players. You can also use the *Aberrant Games'* forum to socialize and meet other new players from around the world. The website is also one of the first places to find information on what is happening in the Rezolution universe, plus previews, product information and much, much more!

Rezolution gives you the chance to fight in a strange and twisted future, explore new worlds, save humanity from itself or, even, hasten its destruction to make way for a new order. Rezolution's rules are simple and easy to learn, but contain more depth and strategy than is almost imaginable. Objective based game-play drives the action forward at all times while our unique combat and turn system means no long waits - you are always involved and up to your neck in action. The only reason to be waiting if you are playing Rezolution is if you have already lost! This is a movie where you control the action and you never guess the ending until it is all over.

Within these pages you will find the passport to this future, and it is you who hold the key to its very destiny...

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A DARK
TOMORROW

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

In the early 21st century, religious and economic tensions increased across the world. A new fanaticism began to rise as different cultures attempted to exert their influences over the rest of the world, fueled by fiery rhetoric from those in positions of power. Countries began flexing their might upon weaker neighbors. What began as a war on terrorism became a war of opportunity where nations were targeted for resources. Religious tolerance was a thing of the past, and no longer was it safe to practice your faith without fear of reprisal. Families were torn apart with brother fighting brother; this was civil war on a global scale. Countries, having spent more and more on the war, became financially depleted while the corporations became more powerful than ever, exploiting every opportunity for growth and reaping the benefits from the continuing need for munitions and technology. Corruption was widespread as government officials, from presidents to ministers, ensured the conflicts would not end in return for seats on the board and shares in the profit.

* * *

2036: Europa officially formed. All power moved to a permanent central parliament in Brussels. Two noticeable exceptions, Britain, who now referred to itself as the Commonwealth, and Russia, were granted partial membership - the Commonwealth by choice and Russia by decree. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union in the late 20th century and the failure of democracy to take a hold, it was deemed by the majority that Russia's political system was too unstable for full membership - but all members agreed they should keep Russia close.

* * *

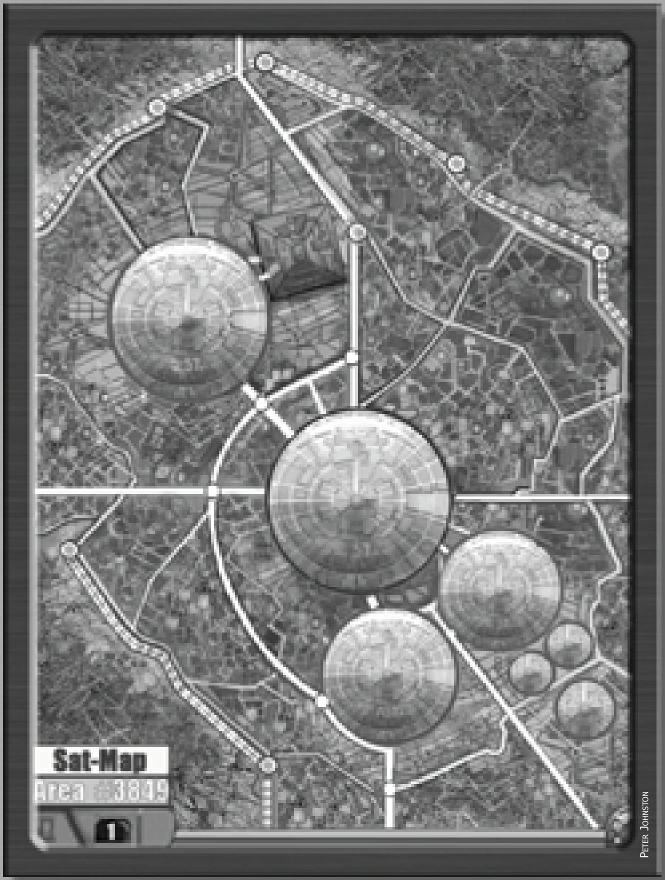
2041: The unification of North and South America to form the Americas. Although the process started a decade earlier, after the collapse of the South American economies and the Washington incident in the same year, unification was put on the fast track to help provide security and stability for the fledgling nation.

* * *

2045: As the Religious Wars continued, people lost faith in governments and religion. Seeing the divide between the wealthy elite and the common citizen widen beyond measure, waves of dissent flow through the proletariat and leaders from around the world began to see tides of change. Though they tried to re-instate the fervor of hatred and fear, the public had become exhausted by decades of war and the enormous loss of life. Anti-war protestors once again took to the streets and this time they would be heard. Peace protests turned violent throughout the world and a number of leading political figures were publicly lynched, the mobs hanging signs around their necks proclaiming 'for crimes against humanity'. At last, however, major combat operations were eventually declared over and fighting slowly petered out across the globe, finally closing one of the bloodiest chapters in human history.

* * *

2047: During the years of warfare, great strides in technology were made. Although a lot of time and money was put into developing more effective ways of killing people, other more commercial applications became apparent. Huge progress was made in the field of propulsion and, subsequently, space travel. In 2047 the government of the Americas had started to build what was to be a permanent base on the Moon as part of a two-part mission: the first was to start mining resources from the Moon



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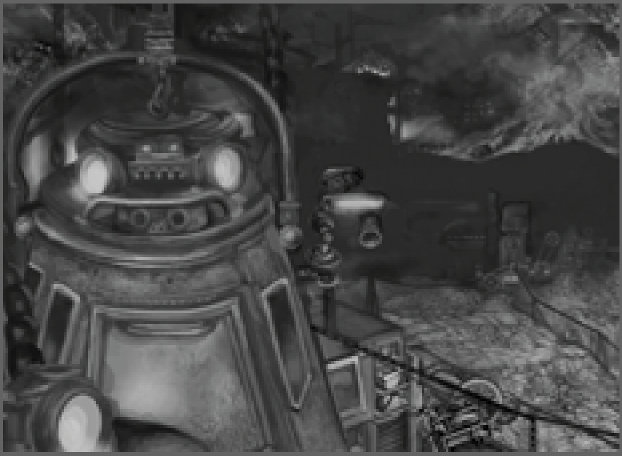


+++ Personal Transmission - Penal Colony
6-Zeta-6, 25th December, 2174+++
+++ Strand, L to Strand, E +++

It’s been thirty days since I got here, but it seems like more. I suppose the long journey made it worse. People said the Rock was a hellhole and now I believe them, god do I believe them. I have seen more misery and death here than any man should see in his lifetime. The stench of unwashed bodies in the mines is unbearable. The rasping scrape of metal on rock as the prisoners dig, day in, day out, seems to burrow itself into your very soul. At least the company only gave me 12 months and let me keep my job, these poor souls are here for life.

Each day I see men beaten. They don’t fight back, but we must still discipline them. Most of the prisoners seem to have accepted their fate, but some of the more violent ones end up in the labs and come back as nothing more than machines, slivers of their mind left behind along with their humanity. Deep down, we all know there is no hope.

I like to watch the shuttles, even though they’re bringing more garbage here for processing, just wishing I could be amongst the cargo going back to the Corp. Oh how I have wished to be on that shuttle, on my way back to you. I cannot imagine the relief when I put some distance between myself and this nightmare. I am not sure I can survive 12 months here, god it seems like a lifetime.

Nothing changes, each day is the same - although today, something unusual did happen. We seemed to hit some kind of metal wall, it appeared refined, not natural, operations had to cease as they could hardly scratch the surface. Control shut the whole area down and moved us out, we haven’t been allowed back since. That’s what passes for excitement round here!

I have asked the company to transfer my pay straight to your account, this should keep you going until I get back. I love you so much and long for the day we can be together again. Yours forever Linc.

Office L. Strand HAZ 82564A

+++ Transmit Message +++
+++ Message censoring in progress +++
+++ MESSAGE REJECTED +++
+++ End Transmission +++

itself, the second to create a staging platform for further space exploration. However, the financial constraints of the last war and the burden of the poorer, former South American states had crippled the Federal Reserve and the project stalled in June 2048.

* * *

2048: The last remnants of the Church, their power collapsing and seeing an opportunity to have a say, albeit a small one, in the new world order, re-emerge as the Vatacina. They became almost overnight the world's largest corporate negotiators, mediating disputes between governments and the corporations that had risen to positions of power and influence over the last few decades.

* * *

2050: The world, still recovering from the ravages of years of war, had changed beyond recognition. Global warming and pollution had been left unchecked. Solar radiation levels had risen drastically and as a consequence cancer, skin disease and mutation was becoming prevalent amongst the poor and working class. Poisonous clouds of smog drifted across the landscape killing the young, the old and the weak in its wake. Millions had been left homeless as a result of the war, and slums were now a common sight in all major cities. As the crime rate soared it was decided that barriers should be raised around the 'inner cities' protecting them from the undesirable elements that gathered in the favelas and shantytowns. To further protect the elite and their employees from the increasingly hostile environment, domed arcologies were built inside the barriers.

Over the next 100 years the geographical face of the planet totally changed.

Rises in the sea level increased in magnitude as more and more of the polar ice caps melted. Lowland valleys across the northern hemisphere started to flood and coastlines changed shape and disappeared. Millions of people fled from the coastal towns and cities as the sea level rose. In the Americas, the island of Manhattan was lost, leaving a bizarre ghost town of rotting concrete spires, and New Orleans also completely disappeared under the rising waters. London and Paris became like Venice as rivers burst their banks and canals appeared where streets once existed. The Netherlands were almost completely submerged.

* * *

2051: Asia Pacific purchased the abandoned Moon Project and, after a short period of restructuring, takes it public with the slogan "everyone should be able to own a piece of the future." By the end of the year the first habitats were completed and residency was established. After years of turmoil, Serenity Base became the first truly multi-national location where all races could exist together, its name matching the environment – for the moment. Other smaller habitats were built, but now all eyes were beginning to turn to Mars and manned exploration began in earnest.

* * *

2052: The Heiwa Accord resulted in the formation of Unipol and the Central Security Organization (CSO), an independent military and law enforcement organization funded by all member states and corporations. During the global conflicts of the first half of the 21st century, the UN had proved to be an ineffective and clumsy organization. Although it tried to keep lines of communication open and provide peacekeeping forces, its efforts failed miserably and in 2052 it was disbanded totally in favor of Unipol. Conspiracy theorists still argue that there was much more to the formation of Unipol and the disbanding of the UN than was officially recorded, although serious historians generally discount those theories.

* * *

"And now we go live on this historic day as Man first steps foot upon Mars — Major Thomas can you hear me?"

"Can you **BEEP**ing believe it! I'm **BEEP**ing walking on Mars! **BEEP**ing Mars, man!"

"Yeah and just look at it, nothing but **BEEP**ing dust, **BEEP**ing miles and miles of **BEEP**ing dust… to think I had to put up with nine months of being stuck in a can, as well as having to put up with the stench of your bodily odors every **BEEP**ing day and I've got another **BEEP**ing nine months back. I hope this was **BEEP**ing worth it for a **BEEP**ing stupid photo op."

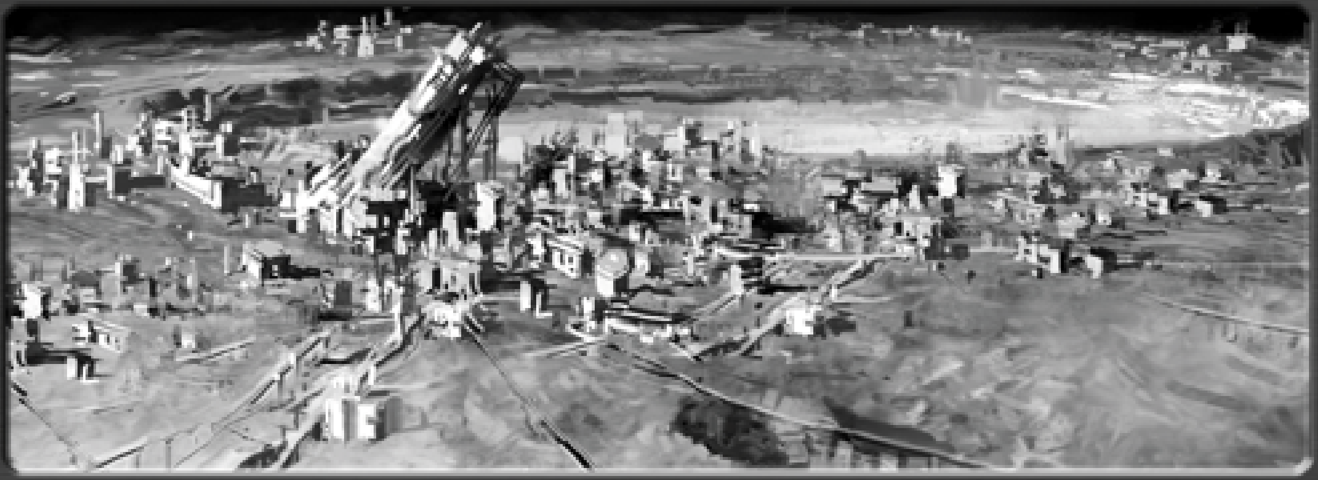
"No **BEEP**ing way man, this is the new frontier!"

"This is **BEEP**ing **BEEP**, is what this is."

"We're very sorry, but we appear to be experiencing some technical difficulties. We will resume coverage of this historic event, as Man takes his first steps on Mars, when we return after these short commercial messages."

2053: Slingshot was operational from the Moon, allowing deeper, faster and cheaper exploration in our Solar System. Space was once again viewed as the new frontier.

* * *



Peter Johnston

2054: First manned landing on Mars. Unfortunately, due to what has officially been classified as "pilot error," Mars I never made it out of the atmosphere on its return journey to Earth.

* * *

2056: The fusion drive propulsion system became a reality. Travel to Mars could now be achieved within 90 days rather than the previous record of 9 months.

* * *

2057: Second manned expedition to Mars. Three days after landing near the Valles Marineris canyon all contact ceased. The Americas withdrew from further space exploration after all hands were declared lost, citing the risk to human life as too great. Even after such tragedies, these were just the first footprints on the Red Planet as soon research ships from Europa, the Commonwealth and the larger corporations followed, eager to establish off-world colonies and discover the mineral wealth that Mars had to offer.

* * *

2061: With the rise in crime and the overcrowded, out-of-control penitentiaries on Earth, a new method of punishment for hardened criminals had to be found and so the idea of the 'Rock' was born. A location was chosen on one of the larger asteroids that made up the belt beyond Mars and without delay construction with the aid of gangs of 'lifers' began. The Rock helped serve two purposes: a prison for the most heinous and violent offenders, and a cheap labor force for hire by the various corporations who wished to mine amongst the mineral-rich asteroids. This not only made the Rock a profitable venture, but also enabled many companies to exploit the, hereto untapped, wealth of the belt. Previously human and robot workers had refused to work here due to the inherent dangers of mining on unstable, moving rocks. The prisoners also had misgivings, but, due to their cranial implants, were not given the freedom of choice others were lucky enough to have.

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2069: The first permanent human settlement established on Mars – a Commonwealth outpost of "no more than 200 souls."

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2072: Asia Pacific became the first incorporated state, melding business enterprises and countries under one corporate logo. It becomes known worldwide as APAC.

* * *

2075: The CSO closed all its precincts in Russia and declared it out of their jurisdiction as the risk to personnel and equipment was far too great.

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2077: Out of the long dead ashes of the Religious Wars came a new terror, the Beholden. A secretive cult that most analysts believed had lain in wait since the end of the major conflict, gathering strength and resources until it had decided the time was ready to strike. They released the Pale Horse virus into the Third World where it devastated the African continent. Countries already in turmoil from internal conflicts now faced an even deadlier threat to their existence. The Beholden claimed that Pale Horse was for the good of humanity and was part of their plan to save humankind from the great enemy. Apart from a number of pre-recorded messages to the media and numerous theories, very little is known about them or their motives.

* * *

2080: The African nations had been truly devastated by the Pale Horse virus, and entire generations had been wiped out almost overnight. The Beholden had come close to total genocide in Africa, but from the remnants of these countries a new empire emerged. Realizing that cooperation amongst themselves was the only answer to survival, the surviving African nations joined together as one nation and the Nile Empire was born. Based in what was Egypt, the Nile Empire had a shaky start. Cooperation did not come easy for nations that had been divided for centuries, but eventually the instinct for survival took over. Petty infighting amongst former nations dwindled and soon it became easier to be allies. The mineral resources found in Africa were needed by other nations and soon trade between the Nile Empire and the rest of the world was increased. Wealth began to be generated and the balance of power in the region shifted away from the corporations who had previously grown fat there.

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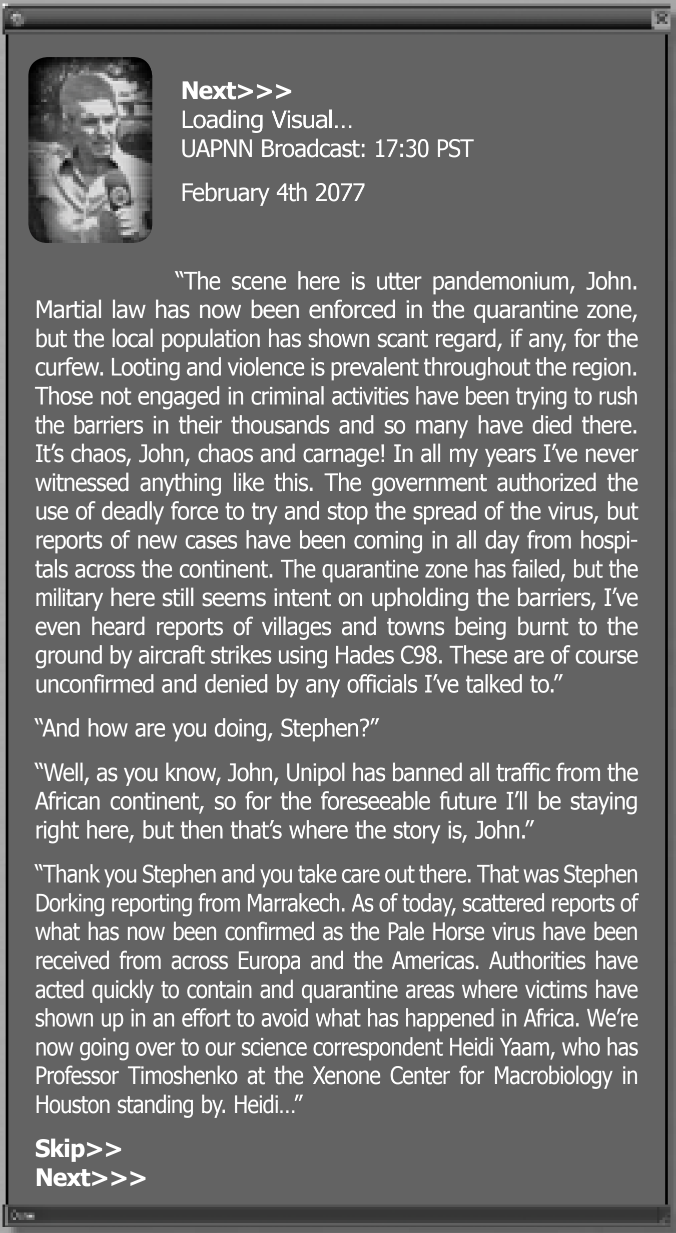
2082: The Commonwealth Mars colony had thrived. Despite their attempts to stop the purchase, huge tracts of land were also claimed by Xenone and other corporations eager to exploit the untapped mineral wealth. The Commonwealth, however, still remained the dominant power on the planet, with all orbital docking facilities and stations built and manned by Commonwealth personnel.

* * *

2086: After seeing the success of the Nile Empire, the remnants of the Indian states took notice and, putting aside previous differences, they banded together and formed the Raj. Pakistan and Afghanistan, countries ravaged by war and disease, were annexed by India in 2086 and the Raj became a dominant force in the area.

* * *

2088: For almost a hundred years research had been looking at various ways to terraform inhospitable planets. As the Earth's atmosphere and ecosystem continue to decay, Mars is viewed as the logical choice for a test subject. In 2088 vast terraforming equipment was placed in strategic locations across the planet's surface and the process of making Mars hospitable began. Although this was going to be a long process and would never create a paradise such as Earth, an atmosphere allowing life on the surface was said to be feasible within the next 20 years.



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UAPNN Broadcast: 17:30 PST

February 4th 2077

"The scene here is utter pandemonium, John. Martial law has now been enforced in the quarantine zone, but the local population has shown scant regard, if any, for the curfew. Looting and violence is prevalent throughout the region. Those not engaged in criminal activities have been trying to rush the barriers in their thousands and so many have died there. It's chaos, John, chaos and carnage! In all my years I've never witnessed anything like this. The government authorized the use of deadly force to try and stop the spread of the virus, but reports of new cases have been coming in all day from hospitals across the continent. The quarantine zone has failed, but the military here still seems intent on upholding the barriers, I've even heard reports of villages and towns being burnt to the ground by aircraft strikes using Hades C98. These are of course unconfirmed and denied by any officials I've talked to."

"And how are you doing, Stephen?"

"Well, as you know, John, Unipol has banned all traffic from the African continent, so for the foreseeable future I'll be staying right here, but then that's where the story is, John."

"Thank you Stephen and you take care out there. That was Stephen Dorking reporting from Marrakech. As of today, scattered reports of what has now been confirmed as the Pale Horse virus have been received from across Europa and the Americas. Authorities have acted quickly to contain and quarantine areas where victims have shown up in an effort to avoid what has happened in Africa. We're now going over to our science correspondent Heidi Yaam, who has Professor Timoshenko at the Xenone Center for Macrobiology in Houston standing by. Heidi…"

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* * *

2089: Implementation of Ident in Europa and the Americas was promoted as the way to safeguard citizens and phase out crime entirely from the inner cities, but many viewed this as another attempt to wrestle freedom from the public. The Commonwealth and Russia refused to take part and a bitter row ensued as old enmity surfaced.

THE FORTUNATE FIVE:

Dravani International

One of the only companies that have survived in business for not just one, but over three centuries. Starting as a small family owned couturier in 1812 Vienna, Dravani International is now a major player. The last century has seen tremendous growth with their medical and pharmaceutical research programs, but it is Elysium Inc; that has cemented their hold on the Fortunate Five over the past twenty-five years. Elysium's black perma-glass pyramids are now a common sight in every major city in the world.

Xenone Corp.

Founded in 2029, Xenone have changed the face of modern society, literally, with their advanced genetic and gene research and, since acquiring Mann Aerospace, the sky hasn't even been the limit for this titan of industry from New Mexico. Many have said that without Xenone, the terraforming of Mars would not have even made it to the drawing board and certainly not become a reality and a home to more than three million families. Yet for Xenone it's not all business: not only are they the wealthiest of the Fortunate Five, but they are the most philanthropic, with homes and programs for the less fortunate including a network of orphanages and free clinics worldwide.

Asia Pacific [APAC]

From your flyer to your vacbot, it is almost certain that Asia Pacific had a hand in its design. From integrated circuits to Stroidozers, wherever you see the hand of technology you can be guaranteed you are seeing the invisible hand of APAC. First coming to prominence when a number of electronic and manufacturing companies merged under the APAC umbrella in the mid 21st century, Asia Pacific has forged a better future for us all. Yet, even for such a cutting-edge company, within its walls family and traditional values still play an important part and the board of directors contains the same family names even if not the same family members.

Medion

Men and women have always needed entertainment and there is only one choice to watch - but it's one choice with over a thousand different channels, simulcast in over a thousand different languages! Medion is also a leader in satellite technology and has enabled Martians not only to tune into their favorite shows, but to keep up with the latest news and talk to friends and family on earth via the Grid.

GeneriCo

From burgers to defense to its omnipresent Mega-Marts, GeneriCo is literally everywhere. The last decade has brought two new and very successful companies under the Generico wing: SecuriClone, the only legally sanctioned replicants on Earth, and MediVac. Though often blamed for deforestation, the global climate disaster, and ruining the night sky by beaming cola commercials onto the Moon, when confronted with these accusations CEO Donald Gambit has one simple reply, "How can we be so bad, when people keep buying our products?"

> <<<Because there's no other choice Donald. The only good thing to come from your pollution of the atmosphere is most nights the Moon isn't even visible from Earth anymore. In fact, because of your companies, it's hard to tell whether it's day or night at all!>>>
>
> +++ Hi-Rez+++

As Russia retreated from Europa, its political system finally gave way under the pressure of corruption and organized crime. The Russian state ceased to exist as the country reverted almost two thousand years into its past, dissolving into a collection of warlord controlled city states divided by vast tracts of barren scrub made useless by over pollution and failing nuclear safety.

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2092: The first Commonwealth colony sleeper ships headed off to Alpha Centauri in search of habitable planets outside the Solar System. The Commonwealth had always been a reluctant member of Europa and, coupled with a desire to rebuild an Empire, they decided to reach out to the furthest edges of space and colonize. This single act of sending colony ships out under the Commonwealth flag signaled the start of years of infighting amongst Europa member states. It was at this point that the Commonwealth broke all ties and declared themselves an independent nation; it would, however, still help fund and allow the operation of CSO officers in its territories — for now.

In 2092 the Grid became fully operational. A series of Earth and Moon-based super-computers and satellites enabled wireless communication to anywhere on the planet, as well as reaching out to the off-world settlements via strategically laid relay stations throughout the system. Communications were bounced around the satellites at speeds faster then any communications network had ever achieved before.

Even today the Grid is still growing at a rate never dreamed of at its inception. It is believed by many, especially those in the underground networks, that the Grid has become self-aware, evolving and growing as more and more networks and systems come online.

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2099: With a new millennium drawing near, another chapter in the story of mankind emerged. Mutations had already become common, but now teenagers with incredible mental powers were appearing around the world. The Vatacina jumped at this opportunity and started to recruit those that were discovered, claiming they were God's children. Most were more than willing to surrender themselves to them and escape from their lives of poverty. At first the numbers were small and the governments and corporations dismissed the claims by the Vatacina that the emergence of those with these powers was a sign that God did truly exist. Who else could have given these poor wretched creatures the abilities they now possessed, the Vatacina insisted. God had now given mankind a miracle to prove his existence, a blueprint for the future and their survival. After years of oppression by corporate greed, corruption, and abject poverty in the cities' outlying areas, people were ready to believe and they needed to believe that there was more to life so the Vatacina's voice was heard. Not everyone, however, was so willing to believe the Vatacina's claims and, as the number of 'mutants' grew, rumors began to surface that they were the result, not of God's doing, but a side effect of Pale Horse or secret genetic experiments by corporations.

Good evening. This is Global 9 News network reporting.

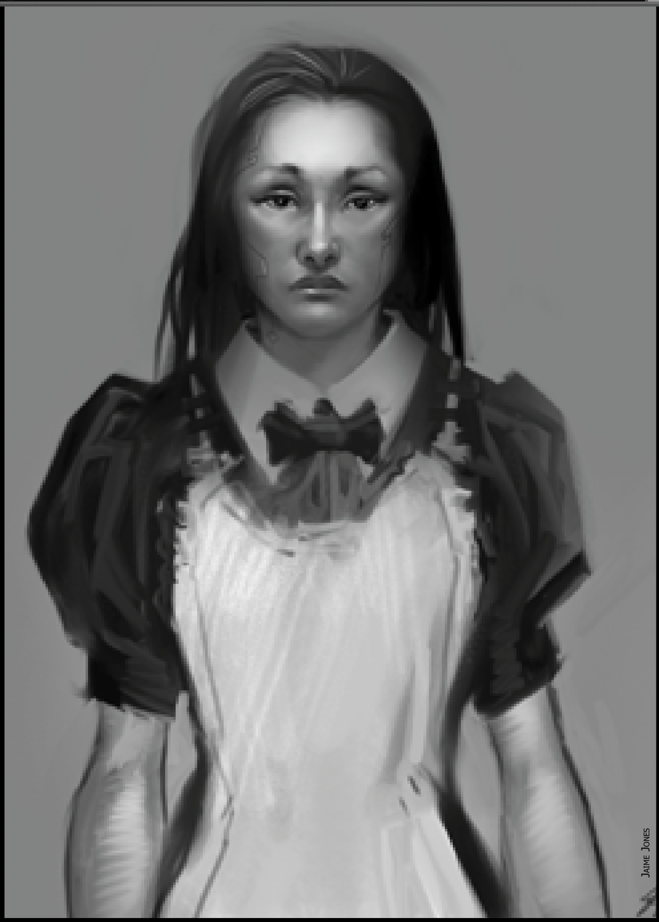
General George Samms, spokesman for Incare, contractors with the Unipol Corrections Institutions, has today denied reports of human rights violations on the Rock penal colony. Solar Amnesty, the sentient life rights organization, recently published a rejected personal communication that suggested violent prisoners are being subjected to extreme body modifications. The communication also implied sanctioned beatings of prisoners to keep them under control. Solar Amnesty refuses to reveal the origin of the message, but our sources believe that it was lifted by Zero, the hacker responsible for last year's Muggly virus, who is already wanted for questioning on various electronic espionage charges by Unipol.

In a press conference this afternoon, General Samms dismissed the claims, accusing Solar Amnesty of fabricating evidence. He claimed there had been no security breach and he further stated that the Incare/Unipol network is one of the most secure in existence today. Solar Amnesty retaliated with renewed claims of 'ghosts' making frequent incursions into the 'closed system'.

General Samms went on to say that forces were closing in on the perpetrator, but when questioned about this, all he would say was that CSO units had been dispatched to a favela on the outskirts of Rio.

Questioned as to the whereabouts of penal guard Lincoln Strand, the rumored sender of the communication, General Samms stated 'he was on extended leave'.

We now go live to our reporter in Boston with breaking news of a violent gun battle developing in the Pleasant Hills Mall...



After all these years, betrayed. He had it coming. I don't understand, but it shouldn't be beyond my comprehension. This floor is so sticky…

Why are my hands wet? I should clean up, it's always such a mess. My work is never done. Just typical, he never has any consideration for me and what I do for him, especially since he met her…

He brought this on himself… I thought he was happy? He told me he was happy. Her fault, everything was perfect until she came along. Everything was perfect, perfect, perf…

Extraction from short-term memory core retrieved from domestic robot GC430-a607g

Classified Alpha 7 under Public Security Act RV3

* * *

2101: The Grid had become the only route for electronic information and broadcast entertainment. Most citizens received their first fully integrated neural interface at 13; VR overlays were used on anyone younger than this to access the Grid, as the surgical procedure was deemed unsafe for anyone under that age. A few older users still preferred to use the overlays rather than have their brain hardwired to the sophisticated electronics needed to fully access the Grid. It is discovered at this time that those with mutant mental powers, now commonly known as Craft users, cannot have the NI implant without losing all of their abilities.

* * *

2105: A thin, but breathable, atmosphere was established on Mars allowing people to work with the use of breathers rather than full environment suits. Valuable minerals deposits found on Mars sparked a rush of civilian prospectors at the beginning of the 22nd century in, what has become known as, the 'Martian Gold Rush', although gold was never found there. Many lives were lost due to inadequate planning and the violent storms that racked the planets surface due to the terraforming process, although this did not deter the immigrant settlers who hoped to find their fortune on the desolate plains.

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2108: The first murder of a human by a robot. In a bizarre double murder that shocked the world, a robomaid brutally killed its owner and his girlfriend and then plunged thirty stories to the ground. No evidence of tampering or re-programming was found.

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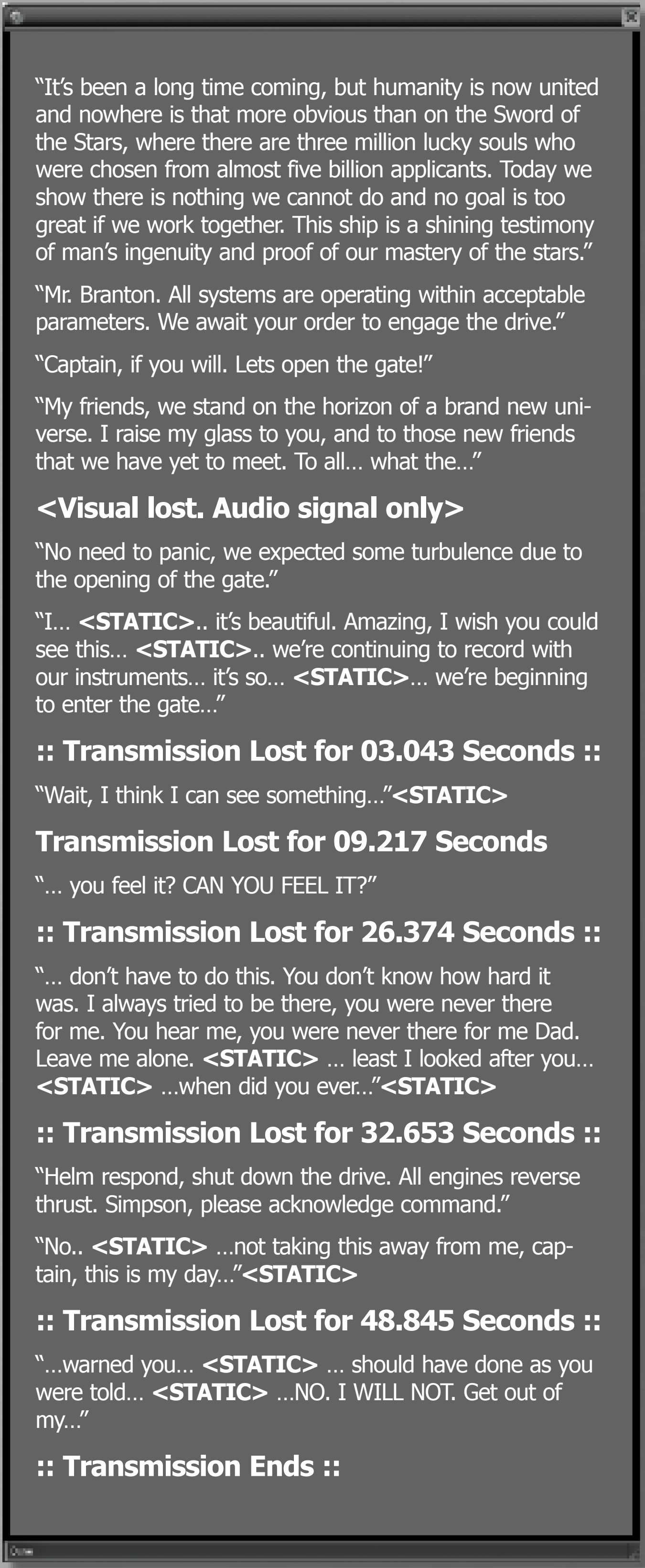
2112: The Commonwealth colonies had been founded so far out that no current communication systems, not even the Grid, was powerful enough to reach them. Foreseeing the communications problem, they had dropped off relay satellites en-route to transmit messages back. The first automatic marker transmission, stating they had reached the Centauri system, was received at a Commonwealth deep-listening post in Mars orbit on June 12, 2112.

2116: A new generation of Colony ships left and, with the latest improvements in drive technologies, were estimated to reach the Centauri system within eight years.

2120: New New York, the world's first submersible city, is declared open off the east coast of the Americas. Offering spectacular surface views of the semi-submerged Manhattan skyline and all the amenities and luxuries of modern city life, it guaranteed safety from the elements and the brigands that now claimed those waters.

2122: The Market came online: a huge AI controlled space station in outer orbit, built by a conglomeration of world governments and corporations as an independent trading exchange and a secure data storage facility for all. The Market is self-repairing and staffed by a unique system of robots that enhance, repair and protect him. Market also became a popular guest on many talk shows after his inception and remains so to this day, although he is always loathe to give economic forecasts, preferring to talk about his art collection and love for classic musicals - he is also regarded as one of the formative authorities on 20th century Bollywood productions!

2124: Hostilities between Arvunk Enterprises and Havat, two mid-sized corporations, broke out into open warfare after almost six months of accusations and incidents of corporate espionage and sabotage. Within a week, the first Corporate War was officially declared as larger entities with stakes in the smaller ones became involved to protect their investments. The CSO was almost helpless, facing stonewalling from corporate executives and misdirection from within their own organization. But hostilities ended almost as quickly as they began after a large and brutal attack on an APAC facility in Sydney, Australia, which had not, as yet, been involved in the conflict. Newly appointed Chairman Hirumi Atai of APAC issued a statement and made a rare media appearance calling for peace, stating this was not the way business was conducted. The following day business returned to normal. Later that year a freak weather incident forced the Arvunk executive flyer to crash, killing the entire Board. As their stock plummeted, APAC bought the complete company uncontested and stripped it of all its assets.



"It's been a long time coming, but humanity is now united and nowhere is that more obvious than on the Sword of the Stars, where there are three million lucky souls who were chosen from almost five billion applicants. Today we show there is nothing we cannot do and no goal is too great if we work together. This ship is a shining testimony of man's ingenuity and proof of our mastery of the stars."

"Mr. Branton. All systems are operating within acceptable parameters. We await your order to engage the drive."

"Captain, if you will. Lets open the gate!"

"My friends, we stand on the horizon of a brand new universe. I raise my glass to you, and to those new friends that we have yet to meet. To all… what the…"

<Visual lost. Audio signal only>

"No need to panic, we expected some turbulence due to the opening of the gate."

"I… **<STATIC>**.. it's beautiful. Amazing, I wish you could see this… **<STATIC>**.. we're continuing to record with our instruments… it's so… **<STATIC>**… we're beginning to enter the gate…"

:: Transmission Lost for 03.043 Seconds ::

"Wait, I think I can see something…"**<STATIC>**

Transmission Lost for 09.217 Seconds

"… you feel it? CAN YOU FEEL IT?"

:: Transmission Lost for 26.374 Seconds ::

"… don't have to do this. You don't know how hard it was. I always tried to be there, you were never there for me. You hear me, you were never there for me Dad. Leave me alone. **<STATIC>** … least I looked after you… **<STATIC>** …when did you ever…"**<STATIC>**

:: Transmission Lost for 32.653 Seconds ::

"Helm respond, shut down the drive. All engines reverse thrust. Simpson, please acknowledge command."

"No.. **<STATIC>** …not taking this away from me, captain, this is my day…"**<STATIC>**

:: Transmission Lost for 48.845 Seconds ::

"…warned you… **<STATIC>** … should have done as you were told… **<STATIC>** …NO. I WILL NOT. Get out of my…"

:: Transmission Ends ::

Last night the sky burned as bright as day. Brother Pavao has taken half the Order to search for the fallen star, believing it a divine gift from the heavens. I expressed my doubts, but he did not heed my words. The scriptures plainly tell us who fell from the sky in the past.

I am relieved to see the torches of my brothers; soon they will once more be within the walls of our Father's house. As they near, I can make out in the gloom the empty carts they left with are now stacked with, what appear to be, large boxes. I cannot suppress the sudden chill that passes through my bones as if icy fingers are sliding around my neck.

Angels. Brother Pavao is convinced they are angels. Though it is true they look fair enough, I cannot bring myself to believe it. I can sense a seeping malevolence and cruelty beneath those silken brows and golden locks. Even the Abbot is caught up in this. I tried to reason with them: was not the Morning Star himself an angel before the fall, but to no avail. For my words I have been confined to my cell to seek strength and faith in prayer.

No one tended the gardens today and I heard no voices raised in morn or evensong from the chapel. Even the trees are still with nary a bird in sight. As dusk descended I could make out voices from the Grand Hall and, risking the Abbot's ire, I crept there to listen. The Abbot has declared the angelic vessels must be opened, the angels have visited him in a vision and commanded him thus.

Oh, how I wish I had stayed in my family vineyards. Upon reaching my cell I fell prostrate, praying that I was mistaken in what I heard, but I fear I should have been praying for our very souls.

I have heard nothing now for over an hour. At times I wished the screaming would stop, but Father forgive me, the silence is far worse. I have bolted my door, but against creatures such as these, I fear it will not be enough.

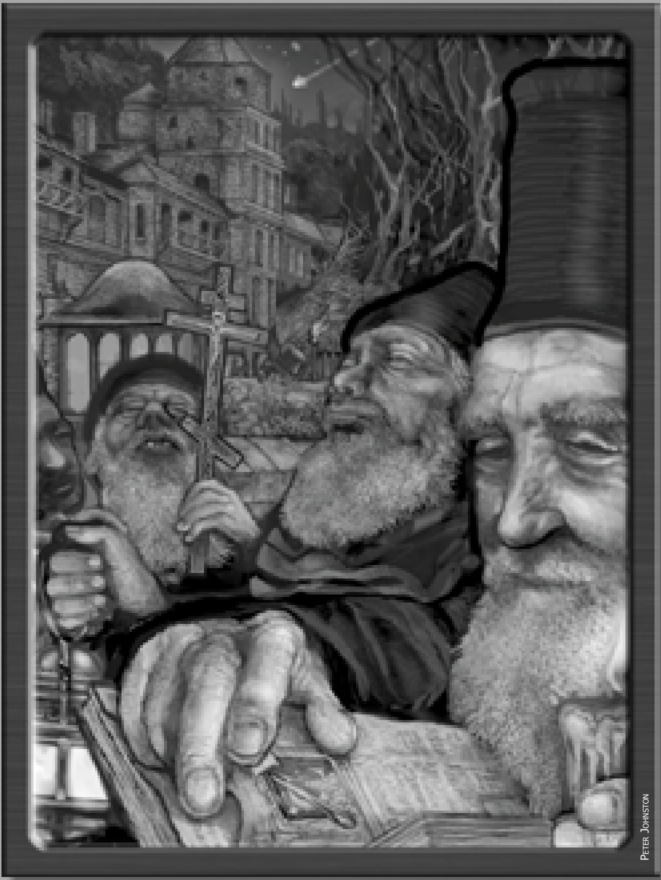
I hear something, like dogs searching for a scent the snuffling sounds are approaching my chamber. I must hide this book, so that others may learn from our folly.

Fragment of a diary found in the ruins
of a Croatian Monastery.
Late 12th century.

Vatacina Library Archive - DV-0001,
Vault 12, Sibylline City.

2132: Life in the 22nd century was hard: life expectancy was short and disease had not been wiped out like many had predicted. In 2132 a new company emerged with a simple promise – eternal life. Although Elysium Inc. did not give exactly what it said in the brochure, to most it was the next best thing. Using technology based on sleeper tubes used for deep-space travel and neural interfaces combined with the latest advances in medical science, they could suspend a body's functions and keep the brain functioning while allowing the 'sleeper' to enjoy fantasies of his choosing pumped directly into his brain with a 'no nightmare' guarantee. Elysium was an instant success and, with strangely affordable prices, in just a short number of years every major city had the familiar black plastiglass shape of an Elysium pyramid.

2133: Elysium Inc. went public with much publicity. Dravani International, however, a major backer of the project during the years of development, exercised a clause in their contract and bought Elysium Sleep Systems Inc. outright for an undisclosed sum.



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2136: The Robot Rights Movement began and there was a coordinated effort by AIs and humanitarian groups for electronic life to be recognized and respected as equals. The Vatacina were hired as mediators on behalf of the RRM.

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2141: The first live message was received back from the Commonwealth colonies. Habitable worlds filled with non-sentient organic life had been discovered and agricultural and scientific teams were already laying the foundations for settlements. The transmissions captured the imagination of all: exotic garden paradises, steaming tropical jungles and glistening water worlds unsullied by man and technology.

ベ・サ

2144: The Vatacina announced completion of construction on Sibylline City in Jovian space, a repository for the Vatacina's accumulated physical wealth and treasures. Though some pundits wondered about the size of the station and the strength of its defenses, Vatacina representatives assured those concerned that these are "purely to protect our irreplaceable collection of artifacts and relics." There were those not satisfied with this answer as it did not explain the huge sensor arrays aimed at deep space.

ア・ヨ

2145: Medion became the largest interstellar media provider. Although many independents existed, Medion now had a saturation point of 97% and exclusive agreements with many corporate arcologies. Pirate stations intensified their efforts to bring news of the outside world to those living under the 'protective' umbrella of the major corporations. Journalism now took on a radicalism never before seen, with many hiring mercenaries or street gangs to help them get the stories they needed to try and open the eyes of the sleepers from their accepting and opiate-like states.

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2147: The Dalai Lama and over 8,000 followers moved to Mars to begin again on "unsullied soil" with complete autonomous rule.

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2148: Rezolution DT went online and within a year was the premier underground meeting place for ghosts and hackers. Authorities were unable to track its source, masterly hidden among many phantom trails. The origins and location remained a secret while some speculated that they even had their own satellite system, although this would be far beyond the resources of any average Ronin.

Hi-Rez, the founder and moderator, still serves in that capacity to this day; a mentor for ghosts, and librarian and curio collector of all information that comes through his portal.

ツ・カ

2150: An agreement was finally negotiated by the Vatacina between the Robot Rights Movement and corporate and government entities; it granted equal rights for all electronic life-forms that were considered sentient, including fiscal compensation and permission to claim a planet of their choosing beyond the belt. Some people grumbled that this was only going to end with them getting sued by their vacuum cleaner, but there was not much humanity could do in the face of the overwhelming number of sentient electronics that were now in use. A number of artificial intelligences, along with several thousand industrial and domestic robots, purchased ships and equipment with their reparation funds and headed for Oberon in the Uranus system, announcing that they wished to be left alone and for all organics to stay out of their space. Any contact with humanity would be dealt with through their agents stationed with the Vatacina in Sibylline City. The rest of the world settled down to business as usual.

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2151: The first monastery in New Tibet was completed on Olympus Mons. Though their numbers had dwindled dramatically, their spirit had persevered and the foundations for other monasteries around Mars were already underway. Seeing what the Dalai Lama had achieved in a few short years inspired numerous fringe orders to travel to Mars and begin a new life as well as bringing new converts to their fold.

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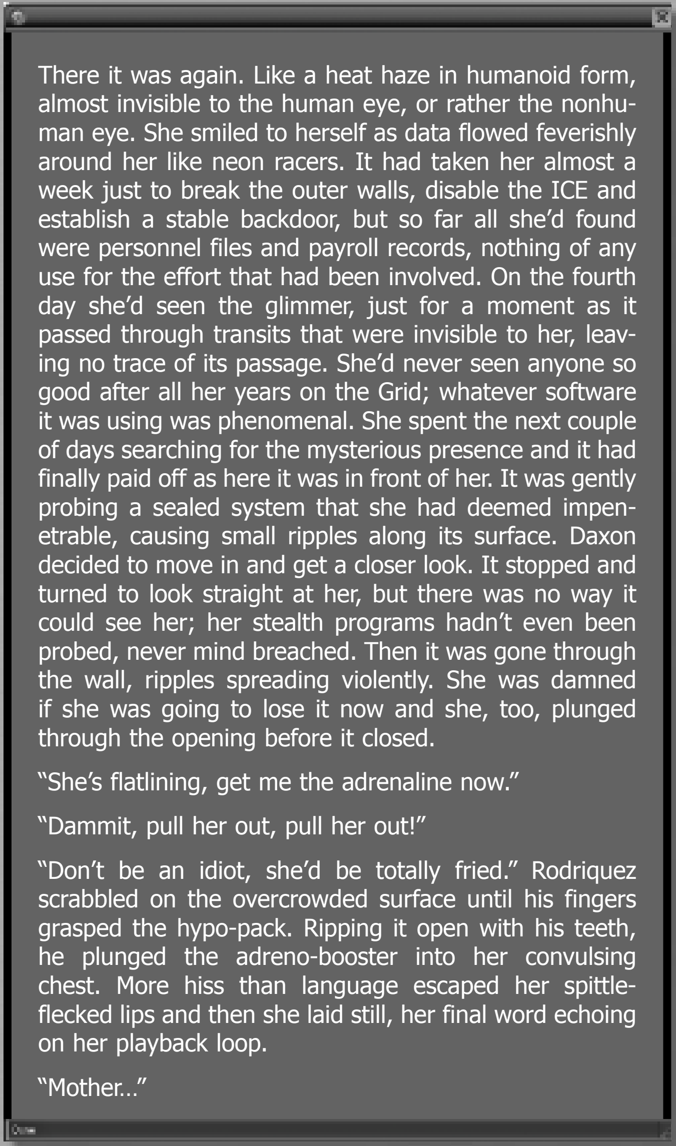
2154: Man has always striven to go faster and further and one Commonwealth entrepreneur was no exception. Dickie Branton, one of the wealthiest men in the Commonwealth, funded research into wormhole technology, although most of it



There it was again. Like a heat haze in humanoid form, almost invisible to the human eye, or rather the nonhuman eye. She smiled to herself as data flowed feverishly around her like neon racers. It had taken her almost a week just to break the outer walls, disable the ICE and establish a stable backdoor, but so far all she'd found were personnel files and payroll records, nothing of any use for the effort that had been involved. On the fourth day she'd seen the glimmer, just for a moment as it passed through transits that were invisible to her, leaving no trace of its passage. She'd never seen anyone so good after all her years on the Grid; whatever software it was using was phenomenal. She spent the next couple of days searching for the mysterious presence and it had finally paid off as here it was in front of her. It was gently probing a sealed system that she had deemed impenetrable, causing small ripples along its surface. Daxon decided to move in and get a closer look. It stopped and turned to look straight at her, but there was no way it could see her; her stealth programs hadn't even been probed, never mind breached. Then it was gone through the wall, ripples spreading violently. She was damned if she was going to lose it now and she, too, plunged through the opening before it closed.

"She's flatlining, get me the adrenaline now."

"Dammit, pull her out, pull her out!"

"Don't be an idiot, she'd be totally fried." Rodriquez scrabbled on the overcrowded surface until his fingers grasped the hypo-pack. Ripping it open with his teeth, he plunged the adreno-booster into her convulsing chest. More hiss than language escaped her spittle-flecked lips and then she laid still, her final word echoing on her playback loop.

"Mother..."

he did himself. Trying to devise a way of utilizing wormholes in space and to travel from one point to another almost instantaneously, Dickie's goal had been to build a huge spaceship and take mankind faster into space than had have ever been achieved before, joining up with the colonies in a matter of weeks. In 2154 Dickie's ship, the Sword of the Stars, was completed. The Sword could house three million people and there was no shortage of volunteers. On July 14, 2154, the Sword of the Stars sliced through space, straight into a wormhole, and was never seen again.

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2156: After closing down operations due to the tragic loss of the Sword of the Stars, the Branton organization re-instigated investigation into wormhole technology at the bequest of the new CEO, Branton's former partner, Jonathon Doyle.

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2158: Transmissions of unknown origins from multiple sources were recorded on the colonies of Alpha Centauri. They were unable to translate the signals, although most agreed that there were at least a dozen separate languages and the Centauri listening-posts were registering more all the time. The recordings were not made public.

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2162: After the loss of his compliant workforce, Man once more turned to technology to take away those unpleasant tasks he deemed beneath him and so he created the synthetic: genetically engineered organic beings supplemented with bionics to enhance their physical attributes. As is so often the case, Man, in striving for perfection, created life superior to himself, but equally as flawed. In February 2162 the Replicant Rebellion began with violence breaking out across the Earth and the Moon. The violence continued throughout the year as they pleaded their case for freedom, but neither side was willing to back down. On November 12th replicants realized they would eventually lose this war of attrition and infiltrated key positions in numerous organizations including the Argos orbital dockyards. They stole four sleeper ships and headed into deep space; Unipol was ordered to stand down and let them leave the system.

ヌ・ラ S I

2167: First reported sighting of 'Mother'. Though rumors had circulated for a number of years of a ghost that could go anywhere and was unstoppable, this was the first time a witness had a detailed description. Rumors were rife among the Grid community as to the meaning of these sightings and her origins.

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2169: 'Top Dog' by Medion Entertainment becomes the #1 rated Grid show.

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2172: Horizon's Gate, a massive wormhole generator built in the Mars system to connect with the colonies, began construction simultaneously with Eden's Gate in the Alpha Centauri system.

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2173: The Butcher of Baker Street, a series of grisly unsolved murders in the Commonwealth, gripped the imagination of the world. While the populace is preoccupied with the "Butcher" mystery, a few leaked reports concerning the loss of contact with some of the outer colony settlements went almost unnoticed.

* * *

2174: February 12th – unidentified craft were recorded near the Sigma Prime colony on Centauri.

June - tensions had risen between the Commonwealth and other Earth nations on the taxation of goods and services on Mars, with many members citing their high percentage rate compared to Earth tariffs. They also complained that the money collected was being used to help fund Commonwealth projects like Horizon’s Gate rather than quelling the increasing lawlessness on and around Mars.

August - the CSO reports that incidents within corporate-controlled areas have risen by over a 120% in the last 12 months and request a free hand in dealing with ‘rogue’ corporate elements. The Unipol Board dismisses the evidence as “dubious and circumstantial at best” and denies the CSO any additional rights in their dealings with the major corporations.

December 24th - the Gate Project finally comes online after numerous setbacks and the first jump to the Centauri system is completed successfully.

In late December, vicious storms along the Tharsis Ridge on Mars claimed a number of settlements including a Commonwealth research station. The Commonwealth believed more than just adverse weather conditions were the cause, suggesting foul play and corporate subterfuge. They have not, as yet, divulged a list of suspects.

* * *

2175…

“"HEY, HEY, HEY, WELCOME TO TOP DOG!!! How you doing there Bob?”

“Just great, Ted. Pumped for tonight’s show - this is going to be one for the history books.”

“Oh, yeah, do we have something special for you this evening.”

“You know the game, two gangs fight out their turf war LIVE for all you at home.”

“But not tonight! That’s right, we’ve got an all new LIVE special from Atlanta. Where two of your favorite competitors join forces to hunt gutter gangs in the undercity. First up, last seasons champions and undisputed rulers of Old Detroit - the MAULERS, with a massive 367 FATALITIES, that includes 54 CIVILIAN casualties!!!!!”

“But remember - civilians don’t count for prizes, just for fun.”

“And at this point, we’d just like to take a moment to say that Medion, its partners and affiliates and, of course, Bob and I, in no way endorse the taking or endangerment of life. Top Dog only reports on what’s actually happening beyond the walls.”

“So, also joining us tonight, last season’s most popular entrants and runners-up for the title of Top Dog - the BELLEWAY BEAUS, looking as beautiful as ever.”

“Beautiful, but deadly”

“So true. But enough with the introductions, the gangs have moved into the sewer systems and our crews are going to be with them every step of the way. A quick word of warning to parents of younger viewers, we don’t know what we’re going to find down there, so be prepared for some sleepless nights if you’ve got kids watching.”

“So let the carnival of carnage COMMENCE!”

Jaime Jones

PROVING GROUND

From the fire escape of the burnt-out brownstone, Mr Lever looked down on the perimeter wall and mused. Virtually every culture had a right of passage, from Minoan bull ceremonies to barmitzvah and tribal scarification. Now, here in the favelas, the run-down slums of the outer cities, the street kids had invented one of their own and most nights they were here, attempting to cross the barrens of No Man's Land. Their objective - to tag the wall of the enclave.

He found it useful to observe, always on the lookout for potentials. Most of the kids didn't make it, the lucky ones escaped with minor injuries while others proved less fortunate, as shown by the carrion cleansed corpses. Occasionally he would see a kid with a bit of the Craft or some extra edge of speed, but tonight these guys were different, he could feel it. They had that spark he looked for and they also seemed to be working as a team – maybe they just had enough of the basics to give them an edge. This could prove to be an interesting night.

There were about six of them and each knew what they had to do. The apparent leader, a potential maven in the making, was discussing a ragged set of charts with a smaller, spindly kid with tell-tale data ports, obviously the gang's Grid jockey. From the look of the discussion, they had been watching this section for some time and perhaps their wannabe ghost had gathered some good intel online. They'd obviously learnt a few basic lessons – never go in unprepared and that teamwork makes your chances of survival higher. That was good, so tonight could be more than just a grisly fireworks' display.

Three kids moved forward, two of them carrying huge sheets of checker plate steel welded together at an angle. It looked like a crude plough. Although the kids were muscular and looked strong, they still moved the plough too easily. Zooming in onto the third member of the group gave him an idea as to what was happening. A tiny slight girl, she was walking slowly behind the muscle like a sleepwalker: She had to be an esper, some kind of kinetic, using the Craft to reduce the weight of the metal and the friction working against it.

Mr Lever smiled as the plan started to take shape in his mind. If the bricks and the esper could push the plough through No Man's Land, then it would trip the razor wire and detonate the mines, but the thickened steel would make them impotent.

The plough made its slow progress across the barrens and the mines began exploding harmlessly against the steel. From the direction of the blasts Mr Lever suspected that the kinetic had also erected some sort of deflecting field in front of the plough. Behind them they left a clear path maybe 20-feet wide, far wider than necessary.

But what about the automated turrets and drones?

Suddenly they spat into life and the choice of section became clear: this particular part of the wall had no slug throwers or armor piercing turrets, just beamers and flame weapons. The city was obviously relying on the anti-vehicular mines for that purpose. From this position he couldn't see the front of the plough, but from the way the lasers were being deflected, it must have been polished to a mirror finish. They had done a lot of careful preparation for this, and he now noticed the muscular youths were wearing some sort of heatproof clothing and thick gloves so they could keep pushing even when the plough glowed red hot from the flame-throwers.

Looking back to the little maven, it was obvious he was using a voice amplifier to keep his team up to date. Sensible, as these sections of the wall were unmanned and if there was no one to hear you and you have no coms, then why not just shout.

Mr. Lever's attention was drawn sharply back to the wall as the drone launchers went into action and now the lack of coms made even more sense. As they screamed out of their armored housing towards the group, the little hacker threw the switch on a cobbled-together piece of electronics in a crate next to him. Mr Lever was impressed - a small EMP generator – and no sooner had he tripped the switch than the drones simply fell out of the sky. Anything that could scramble shielded drones would have toasted any coms these kids could get hold of. But had they been too clever? Setting off a pulse weapon so close to the city, even one so small, would have alerted the CSO. He knew they now had only minutes until the sky would be swarming with the blinking lights of Barracudas.

The plough had now reached the wall and again their careful planning became obvious. Where they had stopped was a natural blind spot and they were safe – for now. One of the larger kids crouched down and the esper climbed on his shoulders. He then stood up and clambered up the rungs set in the back of the plough. All this time the other pusher was assembling some sort of launcher. When the girl was as high as she could get, she unrolled an adhesive sheet about 5-feet square and very carefully applied it to the wall.

Blank? No words, no tag – nothing!

She quickly descended the rungs, taking care not to let go of a cord attached to the sheet. By the time she hit the floor the launcher was ready. From where Mr Lever stood it looked like a homemade mortar. The boy loaded a large spherical shell into it and fired. The shot hit the centre of the sheet perfectly, and burst in a spray of colour. From the way it made the firmacrete bubble, it must have been a potent mixture of paint and acid. After a couple of seconds the fizzing stopped and the esper yanked on the cord. As the sheet came away, a beautifully rendered butterfly with a series of names on its wings was left, permanently etched on the wall. A glimpse back at the maven showed that he had started to take digi-pics of it - after all this work their tag was going to last!

Then the final piece of the plan fell into place. Reversing at high speed from an alley behind the maven and his crew, came a beat-up old truck with more mirrored checker plate on its back doors and roof. This explained why the safe path was so wide. The truck drove straight to the wall, all the while deflecting the energy weapons off the checker plate. The plough crew jumped in as the wheels spun, smoke burning off the tires as they changed direction and the van started to burn its way out of the Zone. It barely slowed to pick up the leader and the hacker, before speeding off into the night with whoops of triumph. Seconds later the first CSO squad arrived on the scene, aerial searchlights playing over the destruction and the butterfly on the wall.

Mr Lever turned away. These kids really did stand a chance and were worth keeping an eye on, they might just prove useful and he was a mean judge of talent…

Jaime Jones

THE
RULES

Peter Johnston

THE RULES

Rezolution is a fast-paced cinematic skirmish game set in a universe teetering on the brink of destruction; where giant corporations wield more power than governments and alien hands weave intricate webs that could spell the end of humanity. You control an elite group of warriors fighting for a better tomorrow, at least for themselves, in a corrupt future where life is cheap and information is everything. It is your choice which side you take in this invisible war, and whether you fight for truth, justice, or just for survival is up to you…

GETTING STARTED

Apart from this rulebook, Rezolution requires you have a number of six-sided dice, a flexible ruler or tape measure, a flat playing surface such as a table (a 4'X4' surface is recommended for the average game) some pieces of terrain, and a number of Rezolution miniatures with their relevant data cards - and one or more friends as opponents is definitely recommended for maximum enjoyment!

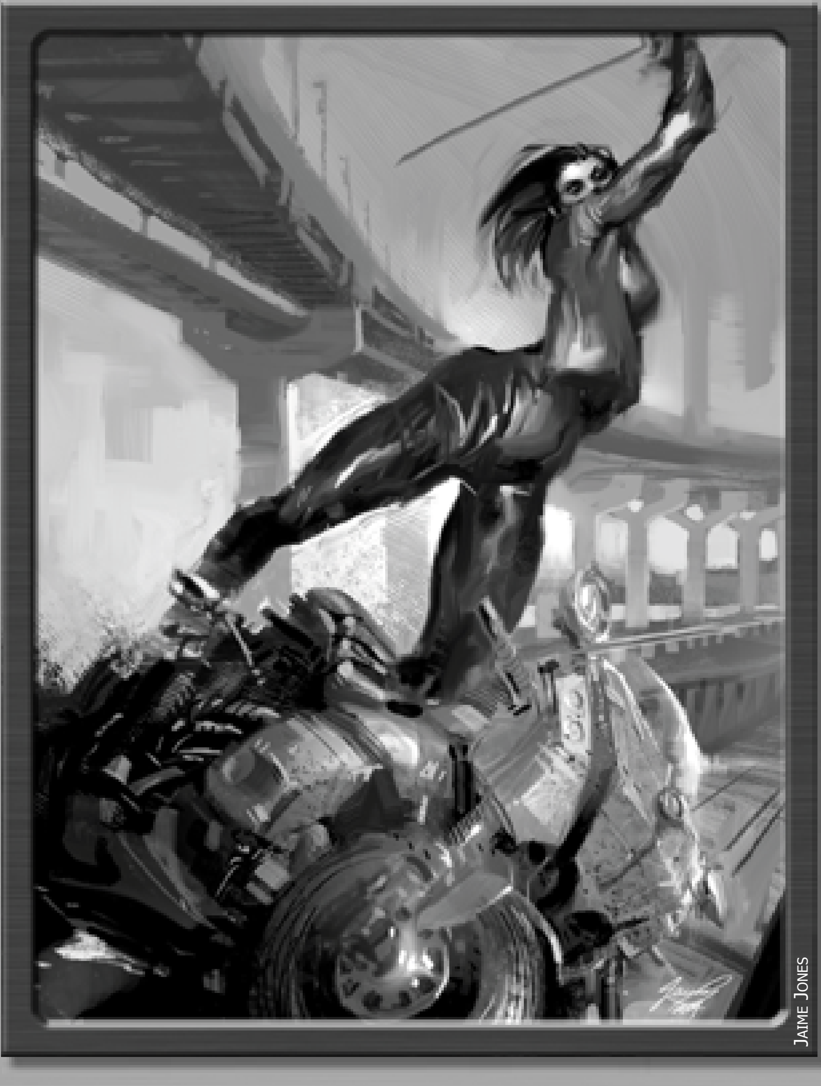
Choosing Sides

Rezolution: A Dark Tomorrow introduces four factions as well as a selection of Merc characters that can be 'hired' by the other factions. Choosing which faction you want to play is a matter of personal taste and can be based on a number of things; each one plays differently from the others and also has a unique look and agenda. The Ronin provide an interesting option; not only do they provide a faction themselves, but they can be hired as Mercs by others as long as the conditions and, of course, the pay are right.

In choosing your faction there is no right or wrong answer. You may prefer the militaristic ranged might of the CSO; the terrifying close combat prowess of the alien Dravani; the blend of tradition, honor and high tech that APAC provides; or, maybe, the Ronin whose goals, motives and crews are yours to mold – the choice is yours.

Game Overview

Before a game begins you need to decide on the assignment and the size of the game (the total points' cost for the models you will bring into play). Once this has been decided and the playing area has been set up according to the chosen assignment, you may place your models in the allocated deployment areas. Rezolution is played in rounds and each round is made up of a number of turns; a player receives one turn per team or independent model in his force. During a model's turn, you may choose to do a number of things such as moving, attacking or hacking. Each model or team is activated individually and usually does a move followed by one action, such as a ranged attack. Once completed, your opponent activates one of his crew and so on. Once a player has activated all his models, his turn is over. When all players' models have been activated, the round is over and a new one begins. A game consists of as many rounds as it takes to determine a winner or as laid out in the assignment's victory conditions.



Jaime Jones

REZOLUTION GAME CONCEPTS

DICE

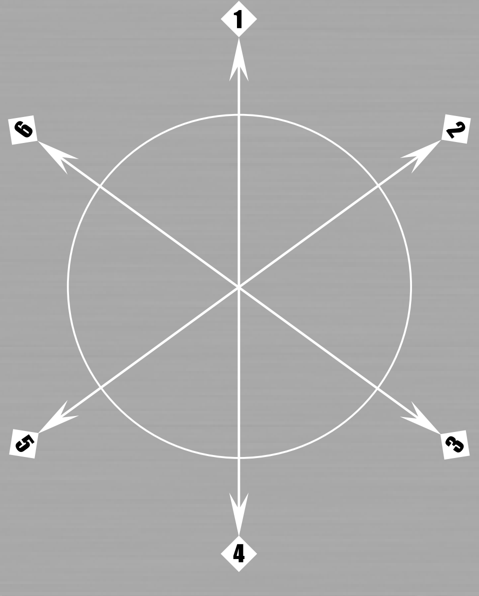
Rezolution uses standard six-sided dice, referred to as a d6, to determine the outcome of actions that occur during game play.

For example: *shooting at a target or engaging in close combat requires you to roll 2d6 and add the relevant attribute and modifiers if any. In certain situations you will also need to roll a Deviation Dice.*

Game play in Rezolution usually requires the rolling of two or more d6. When these rules refer to multiple dice it will be written as 2d6, 4d6, 6d6 and so on, the first number being the amount of dice needing to be rolled and the second the type of dice. A single die is referred to as a d6.

The Deviation Dice

Certain weapon effects or situations in Rezolution require a model or object to be moved in a random direction and this is referred to as random movement. To help represent this we use a Deviation Dice. The Deviation Dice is a small dice with arrows within a larger transparent d6. The inner die has an arrow, while the outer one has numbers as normal. The inner die represents the direction of deviation while the outer is the number of inches to be moved. The Deviation Dice should be rolled as near the target area as possible. The Deviation Dice is the best method for determining random movement, but another way is to use 2d6 and the template supplied in this book. Place the template over the target area and roll a d6 for the direction it will travel, and then roll another d6 for the distance.



Opposed Rolls

During a game a model will attempt an action and an opposing model will use their skill to try to counter the attempt, which is called an opposed roll. Both players roll 2d6 and add the required attribute score to the total; other modifiers, such as weapons and cover, may also add or subtract to the final score. More details on opposed rolls are given in the relevant sections, but here is a quick example:

Mai attempts to fire her pistol at an enforcer. Mai must make an opposed roll to hit him. Mai fires and rolls 2d6, rolling a 4 and a 3, and then adds her RCA (Ranged Combat Attack) attribute of 2 for a total score of 9. The enforcer rolls 2d6, rolling a 4 and a 5, and adds his SAG (Size and Agility) attributes of 2 for a total score of 11. Mai missed! The enforcer managed to successfully dodge the incoming fire.

Target Numbers

The other type of action roll in Rezolution requires equaling or beating a static target number. This involves rolling one or more d6: for most actions a player usually rolls 2d6 and adds the appropriate attribute to score equal or over the required target number; in most cases the target number is 10 unless specifically stated otherwise.

For example: *The enforcer has shot and damaged Mai. She must pass a Nerve test or be suppressed. The target number for a Nerve test is 10 and Mai's NRV (Nerve attribute) is 3. She rolls 2d6, rolling a 2 and a 5 and adds a 3 totaling 10, a success! Mai is not pinned and may move and fire normally.*

Damaging an opponent's model also requires a dice roll of equal or better than the set target number. For damage, this is the model's BDY (Body attribute), but for a damage roll, each dice is treated individually and for each one that matches or exceeds a target's BDY, one point of damage is marked on their data card.

Dice Modifiers
Certain equipment or conditions during a game can add to or subtract from a player's roll or the target number required and this is referred to as a modified dice roll. Whenever there is a + or - sign next to a number, this means your rolled score or target number needs to be increased or decreased by that amount.

For example: *an enforcer takes cover behind a pile of boxes in an alley, this subtracts -1 from any enemy model's RCA roll when attempting to shoot him.*

Natural Numbers
Rolling a dice will give you a number and this is referred to in these rules as a natural number (one that has not been modified).

For example: *Mai rolls 1d6 and gets a 6, this is a natural 6.*

Re-Rolls
Sometimes a weapon, skill or other circumstance will allow you to re-roll a dice. This is as simple as it sounds, just take the dice and roll them again and keep the score from the second roll, even if it is worse than the original. A model can only re-roll once per unique test, per turn.

Additional Dice
Certain items or actions, such as damage rolls, allow players to roll additional dice if the requirements are met. In most cases, for damage you gain an additional d6 every time you roll a 6. When this occurs, keep your original dice scores and roll an extra dice, keeping any additional successes. As long as the criteria are met for the additional dice rolls, more may be called for after the first additional dice roll.

For example: *Arjen hits a SecuriClone trooper. She rolls 2d6 for damage needing a 3 or better on each individual die. She rolls a 5 and a 6, receiving an additional damage die for the six. On the additional die she rolls another 6, so she can then roll another extra dice; this time she rolls a 4. Her total number of dice rolls that equal or exceed the target's BDY is 4 (dice scores of 5, 6, 6 and 4). Her opponent must now mark 4 blocks of damage on the SecuriClone's Damage Gauge.*

Criticals
There are a number of criticals that can occur during the playing of Rezolution: the most common are critical successes and critical failures. A roll of double 6 is a critical success, while a roll of double 1 is a critical failure. Only natural die rolls are counted as criticals and a critical roll disregards all modifiers.

Kyren's finger squeezed on the trigger like a python around a rabbit and twelve-millimeter lead sprayed from her weapon. The result was incredible, as her first sweep with the barrel mowed down the front rank and half of a second. At the same time Locus' Elevens belched silent death, each shot from each hand finding a mark. Kyren allowed a savage grin to crease her lips and squeezed the trigger again, fanning the barrel back and forth. Blood fountained across the passage walls and the SecuriClones crumpled to the ground in droves. Punjar darted out into the midst of the confused group, his hands and feet snapping wrists and knees as he carved through the 'Clones. Kyren and Loocus continued delivering shots to the flanks of the crowd as Meathook charged in beside Punjar, his enormous hammer fists delivering cyber-powered blows that laid his opponents low in a single strike. None of the guards even had the opportunity to fire a weapon; before they were able to mount any sort of counter-attack they were all slain.

Their appearance, however, had not been totally without effect. As Kyren and Locus reloaded their weapons, Soren, their ghost, hurriedly checked her PDR.

"The alarm has been triggered. One of them must have had the presence of mind to radio back to the guard center and someone overrode my sensor loop. More guards will be converging on our location and not just replicants this time. We need to decide if we're still going for the objective or going to withdraw"

Kyren slapped a fresh clip into her weapon and racked the bolt, her grin spreading. Things were about to get interesting.

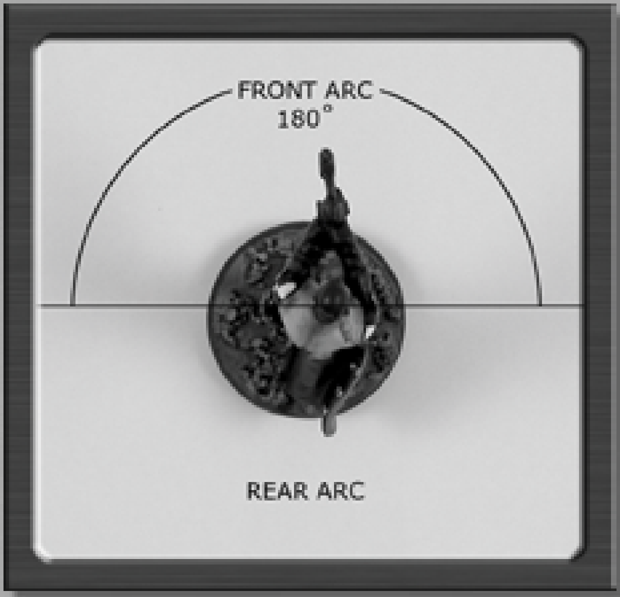
For example: *Damon fires his pulse rifle at a SecuriClone trooper, he adds +2 for his RCA attribute. Unfortunately he rolls double 1 which is an automatic miss and also a critical failure; his gun is now 'jammed' and out of action for the rest of the game unless it is repaired.*

More details on criticals are given in the Ranged and Close Combat sections.

What's a d3?
Occasionally the rules may require you to roll a d3; as there is no d3, to do this you need to roll a d6, halve the score and round up. So you would count the results as such: 1 or 2 = 1, 3 or 4 = 2, 5 or 6=3.

MODELS

Your models on the tabletop represent those under your command in the game and they will perform your orders to the best of their abilities. How successful they are in a given task or operation depends on a number of factors, including the model's attribute profile, equipment, your tactics and, of course, the luck of the dice! Rezolution models come with data cards that contain all the information needed to use that model in the game, including equipment and weapon profiles and any other special abilities or skills.



Model Facing and Fire Arc

A model has a 180° field of vision from its front arc; the front arc is usually determined and centered on some prominent feature on the model, such as the facing of the head or where its weapon is pointing. To avoid confusion and disagreements during play, a model's base can be simply marked or detailed to show its front arc. A model may only attack from its front arc. Once a team or model has finished its movement and begun combat, the facing cannot be adjusted.

A model making an opposed defense roll on being attacked by a ranged attack or a close combat attack from their rear arc, only rolls 2d6 and does not get to add their attribute to the score.

Model Sizes

There are three different types of model size in Rezolution: small, medium and large. The average human is considered medium.

Model Abilities and Skills

Models in Rezolution can have different skills or special abilities and these can affect the outcome of certain situations or actions. They are described in detail on the model's data card and in the Skills section of this rulebook.

CREWS

A crew is the total number of models you have in your force. The size of the crew in a game is determined by an agreed-upon cost or the assignment requirements.

Building a Crew

Each faction in Rezolution has a wide variety of characters and teams from which you can choose to build your crew. A player can only use one faction per game to make up his crew although these can be supplemented by up to 25% of the crew's total points' value with Mercs and/or Ronin. Rezolution miniatures come with specially designed data cards that contain all the information needed to play each model in the game, including their points' value, team or model allowance and any special requirements. They also list their attributes, abilities and weapons.

You and your opponent must decide on a points' value for the game or assignment you want to play and build your crew to that level. Crews can be under a designated point value, but can never exceed the agreed-upon value. The point values given on a data card are per model, even if the card has multiple Damage Gauges. Each model assigned per card must be paid for individually.

On each data card there is a Crew Allowance and also a Team Allowance number, if applicable. The Crew Allowance number tells you how many independent models or teams of that type you may have in your entire crew. For example: Crew Allowance 1-4 means you must have at least 1 of that type in your crew, but no more than 4. A model's Team Allowance tells you the minimum and maximum number of figures of that type that are allowed in a team. For example: CSO Troopers have a Team Allowance of 4-10, meaning the minimum number of troopers in a team at the beginning of the game is 4, although each team can contain up to 10 troopers. The CSO Trooper allowances are displayed on their data card as - Crew Allowance 1+ Team Allowance 4-10. The Crew Allowance means they must have at least 1 team, but there is no limit on how many more they can have. Some models are referred to as attachments - this means they must be attached and operate as part of a designated team.

Points' values are provided as a guide to your games and for tournament play, but should not be considered the be-all and end-all of games. Feel free to experiment in your games as sometimes it's fun to be outnumbered and have the odds stacked against you. It is in situations like these that tales of heroes are born, and as long as you and your opponents are having fun, that's the main thing.

MODEL TYPES

There are three different types of models in Rezolution. Players can build a crew consisting of the following different types:

Independents: An independent model is one that operates autonomously and does not have to worry about staying within a given range of other models on their crew. They can join a team and give them the benefits of their leadership and skills, or they can even form a team with other independent models. This must be declared at the beginning of the game and for the rest of the game they must activate and obey all the standard rules for teams. Independent models do not have to receive an order from a model with the Leadership ability to use any orders or special actions, as they are considered to be able to act on their own initiative, although they still have to pass the required morale tests if necessary.

"So why didn't you go?"

"What?"

"With the others. You know – off to Oberon."

"Do you know how boring it would be to spend eternity with nothing but a bunch of robots for company? How are you this morning 10010010100010011100 – oh yes delightful..."

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1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13
OPTICAL ENHANCEMENTS IDENTIFIED
CLASSIFICATION:
C4RD58-65M2G-KTV2-4ACHEY
ZOOM
I8 - G1

PETER JOHNSTON

Teams: These are a group of models that must stay within a specified distance of each other on the tabletop and this is called cohesion. This is usually a distance of up to 3" unless otherwise stated in their profiles. Teams must also act as a group; for example, they must all make ranged or close combat attacks and hide or hold actions together, although ranged and close combat attacks do not have to be at the same model. The exception to this is if a model in a team has been engaged in close combat by your opponent; when this happens that model is considered to operate as an individual until the combat has been resolved. On its turn, a team's models must have finished their moves before any other actions are attempted. Once a model in a team attempts an action such as ranged or close combat, that team may carry out no further movement, unless this is due to a skill or special ability detailed on the model's data card.

If a team has a choice of weapons on its data card, a player must choose one of them and all members in that team of that model type are assumed to have been assigned the same weapons for the game.

Named Characters: The Rezolution universe is bursting with personalities who may join your crew for a particular assignment. Only one version of a named character may be fielded in a player's crew.

ACTIONS

A model can perform a number of actions during its turn. In most cases actions are only performed after a model has completed its movement; these may include craft, ranged or close combat attacks. Models that are hardwired are an exception to this rule and this is explained in detail later in these rules.

Orders

Certain actions, such as hold, require orders to be given. If a team is within 6" of a model with the Leadership ability at any time during its turn, it may accept an order. Models do not have to be given orders to attack in ranged or close combat. Independent models do not have to be given an order to use actions as they operate individually, although they still have to fulfill any other requirements. A team or model can only be given or receive one order per round. If a model with the Leadership ability is part of a team, any models in that team may use their NRV attribute for morale tests even if they are further than 6" away from the model, although they must still be in team coherency.

HARDWIRED

In Rezolution hackers ply their trade on the data highways of the Grid, a three-dimensional electronic world and communication system. These individuals are highly-skilled computer operatives who live for being online and, once hardwired, they can affect various elements on the game table or achieve certain assignment goals. Only models that have the HAK attribute can become wired to the Grid and this is usually done by connecting to a terrain feature that has been designated a hard-point terminal on the game table. Hard-Point Terminals (HPTs) must be set up before play starts. To become hardwired, a model must be in base contact with the HPT. Once hardwired, a model may perform certain actions via the Grid during the control phase; if these models perform an action during this phase, they may not activate and take any other actions during that round. They also count as a prone model for combat purposes. If no actions are performed on the Grid during the control phase, they may activate as normal during the round.

MODEL ATTRIBUTES

All models in Rezolution have an attributes' profile, which is displayed at the top of their data card. This represents your models' abilities in game terms: how fast and strong they are, how good they are with a weapon, how they react under pressure. The higher the attribute score, the better the model is in that ability. If a model has 0 in an attribute, such as RCA, it can still use that ability, but receives no modifier to its roll. If it does not have the attribute at all, it cannot use any abilities or equipment that require it.

Move (MVE): The Movement attribute represents how fast in inches the model can move on the playing area. A model can run double its MVE in a turn, but may perform no other actions after a run move.

Ranged Combat Attack (RCA): This represents how effective the model is using ranged weapons or special abilities. When firing at an opponent, a model's RCA attribute is added to your opposed dice roll to create your total score.

Close Combat Attack (CCA): This is how effective the model is in close-quarter fighting. When attacking or defending in close combat, a model's CCA attribute is added to your opposed dice roll to create your total score.

Size and Agility (SAG): The Size and Agility attribute represents how difficult a model is to hit in ranged combat. A model's SAG attribute is added to a defending player's dice score when making an opposed roll after being attacked in ranged combat.

Body (BDY): The Body Attribute represents how strong and tough a model is. BDY is used in a number of different ways during play:

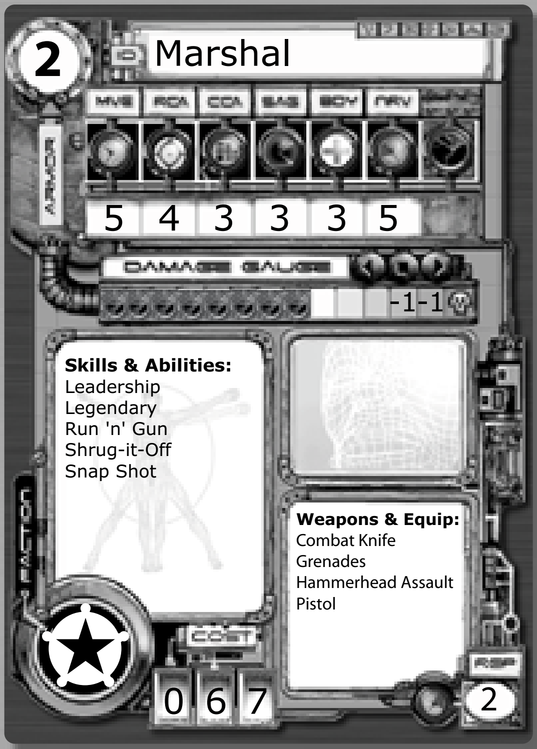
1. A model's BDY is used as the damage target number when an opponent has made a successful attack. The attacker has to roll equal or above the target's BDY to wound it.
2. In close combat, an additional d6 damage die is given per point of BDY over your opponent's BDY on a successful hit.

Nerve (NRV): The Nerve attribute represents your character's mental toughness and leadership abilities. The NRV attribute is used for all rolls that require the use of a model's mental strength, such as morale, as well as morale tests and defending against telepathic and other such attacks. The base target number for the NRV test is 10, although this can be modified by situations or model abilities. Players rolls 2d6, add their NRV attribute and try to score equal or over the target number.

Hack (HAK): The Hack attribute is how skillful your model is at cracking security and computer systems. Most systems will have a target number you will have to equal or beat by rolling 2d6 and then adding your HAK attribute. Some systems require you to be 'hardwired' before you can attempt to control them, so this will require your model to be adjacent to a terminal.

Craft (CRFT): A number of characters in Rezolution can unleash deadly forces just by the power of thought alone. These rare and dangerous individuals are shunned by much of society, but can still find employment with various crews or corporations, and even find their calling in the arms of the Vatacina. The Craft attribute is how sensitive and powerful a model is in controlling the awesome powers of the mind!

Reputation (REP): Some independent and special characters have earned a reputation that precedes them. These individuals have survived many exploits, and stories of them and their adventures are whispered from the highest corporate towers to the lowliest dive bars. These individuals have earned their reputation in action and become tougher because of it. A model's Reputation attribute is used to help determine order of play; during the control phase you will need to roll 2d6 and add the highest REP in your crew to the roll. This is known as the control roll and whoever scores highest in this, has the choice of first turn in the following round. A crew's leader is usually the model with the highest REP and the Leadership ability.



Skills & Abilities:
Leadership
Legendary
Run 'n' Gun
Shrug-it-Off
Snap Shot

Weapons & Equip:
Combat Knife
Grenades
Hammerhead Assault Pistol

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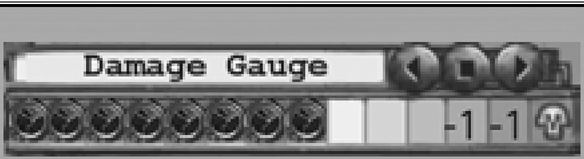
you'll soon be able to move to somewhere better
or even off-world!

You know who they are and what they are doing –
so why not let us know too.

UNIPOL *Fighting crime so you don't have to.*

THE DAMAGE GAUGE



The Damage Gauge: This represents how 'healthy' a model is. Every point of damage a model takes is marked on its Damage Gauge on its data card; when a model has been injured a number of times it begins to take fatal damage and negative modifiers may be applied to its attributes as it gets weaker from its injuries. When a model has reached the last block, it is usually considered dead or grievously injured and removed from play. The best way to keep track of damage is to put your model's data card in a PVC sleeve and use a dry erase marker to keep record of the damage it takes. After the game you can simply wipe it clean and you are ready for your next opponent! A team data card will contain multiple Damage Gauges; assign one per model in the team. For particularly large teams, a player may have to use two team data cards to track all its models.

ASSIGNMENTS

Assignments are the missions you take your crew on. Each one has certain conditions for play and victory, and each assignment briefs you with all the necessary information needed. If you wish, you can design your own assignments and scenarios for your games, but make sure all players taking part are in agreement about victory conditions, special rules and set-up requirements.

PLAYING THE GAME

The Golden Rule

The Golden Rule is to have fun! Ok, so there's a bit more to it than that, but at its core that's why we play games. Although one person's fun can be fiercely competitive strategic play while others have a more relaxed 'narrative' style, it should always be about all the players having fun. One way to keep the it fun is to keep the game moving. Rezolution has been designed as a fast-paced cinematic game and sometimes events may occur during play that you do not know how to resolve immediately. Discuss any such events with your opponents, and try and quickly come to a mutually agreeable solution to keep the game moving. If both parties are at an impasse, the players should each roll a dice and the one with the highest score should make the decision. After the game there is plenty of time to discuss the occurrence and check the rulebook for clarification. Remember have fun, be a good sportsman and crush your opponents!

Laying Your Cards on the Table

We recommend players place their data cards on their side of the table so that as you activate a model or team, you can flip their data card over to know they have been activated. This can be very helpful for keeping track of who is activated during larger games or ones with lots of independent models. If you have equipped a model with a large weapon, such as a mini-gun, and you do not have a miniature to represent it accurately on the table, make sure your opponent knows which model is carrying it and that their data card is marked appropriately. During a game your opponent may wish to check your data cards to view damage or attributes - please share this information openly and courteously with them.

THE GAME ROUND

A game round consists of the control phase followed by a number of turns equal to the number of teams and independent models in play. Players alternate activating one team or independent model per turn until all models have been activated. Once this has happened a new round begins, starting again with the control phase.

The Control Phase

So named because everything that happens in this phase is out of the players' control - well almost! At the beginning of each control phase the players must make a control roll, and this is done by rolling a 2d6 and adding the highest single REP from the models within your crew. The player with the highest score can choose to go first or choose another player to activate. If he passes play to an opponent, the player that won the roll also chooses which of his adversary's models or crews will activate during the first turn!

It is during the control phase that players may attempt to rally teams or models that are panicked or suppressed. Check the status of models in fatal damage by rolling a fatal damage test; test for dispersal or movement of fire, gas or smoke; and do all random and compulsory movement. It is also during the control phase that those who are hardwired may attempt to download data; control a system; open, close, and lock doors; or any other relevant Grid activity. If there is more than one model hardwired, the player who scored the highest REP test for the round goes first. Remember, once someone has successfully hacked a system, that system is considered locked down for the round and no one else may affect it.

Control Phase Order

1. Control roll.
2. Special effect rolls (poison, fire, etc).
3. Fatal damage rolls.
4. Attempt to rally models.
5. Compulsory movement.
   Models first, then all other compulsory movement, such as smoke, etc.
6. Grid play.

The Game Turn

Play proceeds clockwise in the order decided at the start of the round. During your turn you may activate one model or team; once they have performed all their movement and actions, your opponent will then take his turn and this is repeated until each player's whole crew has been activated and taken a turn. A player may have more models or teams than his opponent: as one player activates his last model or team, the other player continues to activate his models or teams until all are completed. At this point the round is over and a new one begins. Models and teams may only activate once per round. Once a model or team has had their turn, remember to flip their data card over so it is face down to show they have been activated.

Model Activation

When a model or team is activated in a player's turn, there are a number of options that are available. In most cases activation consists of movement followed by an action, either a ranged or close combat attack. Other actions that can take place are hacks, repairs and craft attacks. Orders can also be given to models at the beginning or end of their movement.

Model Turn Summary

1. Movement
2. Action

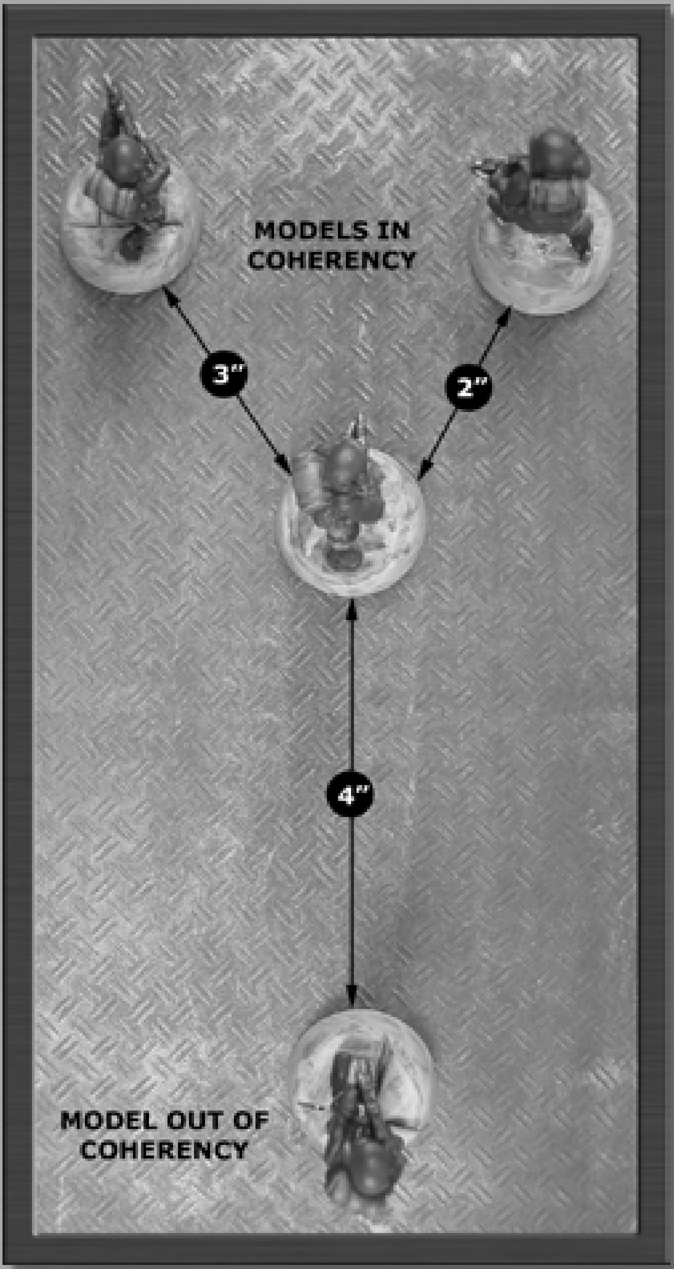
An independent character is activated individually; only that model will activate on its turn, unless it has bots under its control when they will activate as if they were a team and all going on the same turn, although normal coherency rules may not apply. An independent model may move and then perform an action, if it chooses to do so.

When a team activates, models may either move or forfeit their move as long as they stay in coherency with other models in their team. The only exception to this is when a team declares a charge and then all models in that team must charge and move towards the nearest enemy model(s). Once movement is completed, they may then attempt to attack or perform other actions; no movement or facing changes are permitted once models begin their action phase.

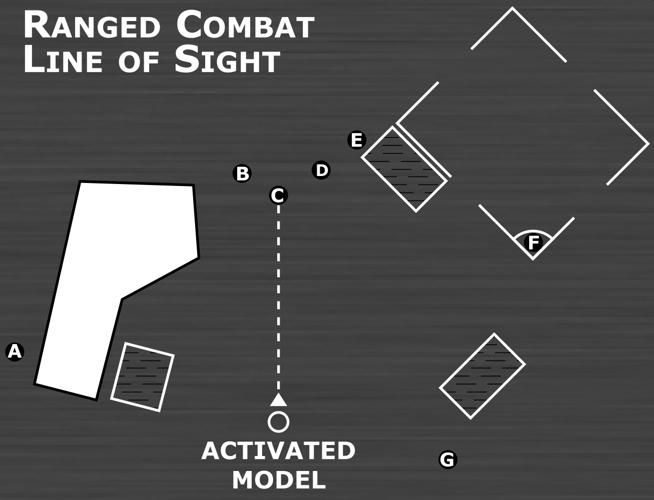
Team Coherency

Teams stick together for many reasons: camaraderie, increased effectiveness or simply safety in numbers. To represent this on the tabletop, they must keep within 3" of another model in the same team. If a model gets left behind, this affects the way the team operates, so at the end of a team's movement if a model or models are out of cohesion with the rest of the team, they must make a NRV test. If they fail, they are automatically considered suppressed and may take no further actions until their team comes back to reclaim them. If cover is available, they can hide.

If the model succeeds in its NRV test, it must attempt to catch up with its teammates on the following turn. It can perform no other action except movement until it is once again in cohesion with the other models in its team. Every turn it is out of team coherency, it must make a NRV test as described. Models in close combat ignore this rule as they have more than enough to think about. Once the combat has finished, and if the model survived, it must make its way back to the team as fast as possible; if it cannot reach them in one turn, then standard team coherency rules apply as above.



RANGED COMBAT LINE OF SIGHT



Models B, C, D and E are in the activated model's line of sight. Model A is behind a building and not visible at all to the activated model, while F is hidden and can be ignored unless the activated model wishes to try and spot it. Model G is in the rear arc and therefore cannot be targeted.

Line of Sight

Ranged combat usually requires a model to have line of sight to its intended target, which means the attacking model must be able to see the model it wants to attack. Line of sight is a straight line from the attacker to the target, but terrain or other models can block line of sight.

Line of sight between models is drawn from the center of the attacking model's base to your opponent's model. Remember the model is in a static pose, so extravagantly positioned limbs should not be counted for line of sight. The best way to determine line of sight is to use a laser pointer. If you can mark the enemy model's head or torso when you have the pointer positioned from the firing model, you can take the shot.

Models cannot be targeted if they are behind an enemy model of the same size or larger. You can target through your own models as long as they are the same size or smaller, as it is considered they move out of your line of sight to accommodate their teammates, even though they do not actually move. Large models, even on your own crew, still block line of sight. Models engaged in close combat will block line of sight to similar sized or smaller models that are behind them.

Models attacking an enemy that is prone and within 1" of cover have to have a direct line of sight to the model and must attempt to spot it before attacking.

The Measure of a Man

All measurement for ranged combat is done from the center of a model's base to, at least, the edge of its opponent's base. Measuring distances for charges, movement and ranged attacks are done after the action is declared, not before. If a model is out of range the action is still considered to have taken place - you just didn't quite make it.

JAMIE JONES

MOVEMENT

Once a model is activated, it has the choice of moving before taking any other action. When a team is activated, if they are intending to move, movement must be done one model at a time and any movement must be completed before taking any other actions.

Models in a team can be moved in any order that is preferable to the player. Not all models in a team have to move as long as they remain within their teams' cohesion limits - usually 3" by the end of their movement. Remember to face your models in the desired direction before moving on to another one, as once you have started moving one model you cannot change facing on previously moved models.

A model may pass through a friendly model if its base is the same size or smaller. Models may not finish a move with their base overlapping that of another. If a model is trying to pass an enemy model, it must immediately stop if it passes within a ½" or close combat range of its opponent as detailed in the Close Combat section.

Random Movement

Some events, effects and models may be required to move randomly, which is simply done by rolling the Deviation Dice or using the template in this book. Some random movement effects may be slightly different, but they will be detailed with the item or model.

Models that are moving randomly due to fire or other effects and are attacked do not make opposed tests; instead your opponent must roll against a target number of 8 to hit them. Models that are subject to random movement do not need to take morale-based NRV tests, as the focus of their attention is whatever is happening to them — for example, trying to put themselves out!

Encumbered Models

Certain situations may occur during an assignment, such as carrying a wounded comrade or a heavy piece of equipment, which make a model encumbered. The encumbered model suffers a -2 modifier to any RCA, CCA and SAG rolls and may not make a run move.

Running

Models may run up to double their MVE unless encumbered or it is specifically stated otherwise. A running model may perform no other actions after it has run. If a model has moved over 10" in a turn, anyone attempting a ranged attack on it receives an additional -1 modifier to their RCA.

Compulsory Movement

This is movement a model is required to make. Compulsory movement must be made during the control phase.

Fleeing

A fleeing model moves 2d6" towards the nearest table edge or exit away from enemy models. This move is made immediately when the model or team flees. A fleeing team or model may make an attempt to rally during the control phase, but if this fails they will continue to flee at their usual run MVE — this is a compulsory move and is always made during the control phase. If a model would immediately flee off the table, they are left at the table edge until the following control phase so they get at least one chance to pass their morale test and remain in the game.

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Carrying Other Models

Models may carry another model and move normally if their BDY is higher than the model they are carrying. If a model with a lower BDY attempts to carry a model with the same or higher BDY, they are considered encumbered.

Jumping

A model may jump over an obstacle or gap up to a distance of 1d3" horizontally and up to 1" vertically on its turn. Model movement is over when a model has completed its jump unless it lands in close combat, which is resolved as normal. If a model does not roll high enough to clear a jump, it may either fall, if trying to clear a gap, or collide with the obstacle it was trying to clear. If a model collides, it is considered knocked prone and takes 1 point of damage with no armor modifiers, staying on the side of the obstacle it started on and taking no other actions that turn.

A model cannot jump if it is encumbered.

A model may choose to land prone to take advantage of cover and terrain features — this is referred to as a dive. To do this after completing your jump, roll 2d6 and add its SAG. If you score 10 or above, you have landed safely. If you score under 10, you automatically take 1 point of damage; this ignores all armor and abilities and is immediately marked on your Damage Gauge.

Models can run and make a jump move, but upon landing their move is over. A model cannot attempt a charge and jump and they cannot jump when they are on rough terrain.

For example: *Arjen has a MVE of 6". She attempts to jump an obstacle 2" wide and 1" high. Moving 1" up to the obstacle, she rolls 1d3and gets a 5, which gives her a 3" jump. She clears the obstacle with ease.*

Climbing

A model may climb stairs, ladders or other easy means of elevation access at its usual regular MVE rate. You cannot run or charge while climbing. Other surfaces and slopes are considered terrain types and the appropriate modifiers may apply.

Falling

If a model falls from a height, for whatever reason, it takes 1d6 of physical damage per inch it drops. Armor is subtracted from the damage dice as normal. If the model survives the fall, it is considered prone. If a model is 1" from the edge of a drop and is hit by a ranged weapon, a physical Craft power or is knocked prone, it must make a SAG-based target number test or fall.

Linear Obstacles

Obstacles such as walls or barricades over 1" in height are considered rough terrain and cost 2" of a models MVE per vertical inch to cross. If you cannot scale the obstacle in one turn, you have to remain at its base until you can use the model's full MVE to climb it. If the model does not have enough MVE to be able to do that, it is considered impassable terrain. Obstacles under 1" in height and ¼" wide cause no penalty to a model's movement. You cannot run and cross or scale a linear obstacle; you either must cross it using your normal move or jump over it.

PRONE MODELS

If a model is knocked prone it may only crawl up to 1" per turn until it gets up. Models that are hardwired or using Craft powers where they are considered prone for combat purposes may not move at all.

A model may stand back up on its turn by forfeiting its move or its action; it may not run, hide or hold after standing up.

Prone models within 1' of cover are considered hidden and cannot be spotted unless the attacker has direct line of sight.

STUNNED MODELS

A stunned model follows all the same rules for a prone model, except it may not stand up or take any other action. A model may recover from being stunned during the control phase by rolling equal or over a target number of 10 on 2d6 plus its BDY.

TERRAIN

There is a wide variety of possibilities and terrain types that can be used as battlefields in Rezolution; from attacking an illegal gene research station in the Amazon jungles, to the submersible city streets of New New York; from a rickety cluster city in a decaying orbit, to the pioneer towns on the plains of Mars. Conflicts often take place in unusual and sometimes unsuitable areas for such activities. Always discuss and assign terrain types on your game table before play starts. Most Rezolution game tables should be packed with terrain, as large wide-open spaces are a death trap and are avoided by all except the most insane or uncaring individuals. However, they can also present some unique and interesting tactical challenges to players so they should not be ruled out of games entirely.

Open

Open terrain can be offices, city streets, fields or any space where it is relatively flat and there is nothing to impede movement. Models may move without any penalty over open terrain.

Rough

Rough terrain can be debris-littered ruins, sewer channels, dense jungle, or any areas on the field of play where a character would be hindered moving. Movement over rough terrain is at half the normal rate; for example: *1” becomes 2” and the penalty applies as soon as a model’s base touches the rough terrain and continues until its base is completely off of it.*

Impassable

Impassable terrain is just that: it can be ruined buildings, sealed doors or gaping chasms. A model may not move over impassable terrain unless there are special circumstances such as an item of equipment or special model rules that allow it do so.

Blocking Terrain

These are terrain pieces or features that completely block line of sight to a model such as high walls or hills. Adjacent corridors and/or rooms in buildings are also considered blocking terrain.

Woods and Boulder Fields

Some terrain, like woods and the large boulder fields found on Mars, offer ideal spots to hide and view the enemy while at the same time providing the maximum amount of cover. Models in woods or boulder fields can see out if they are within 2” of the edge, while models outside can only see in up to 1”. In most cases these types of terrain are considered as rough terrain for movement purposes.

Interiors

Setting your table up as the interior to a building provides an exciting and dynamic gaming environment and will change the effectiveness of certain models and weapons, creating many new tactical possibilities for your crew. A number of possibilities are given in the Mission Manual section of this book to create unique environments – such as Zero-G fighting in sealed environments, where stray shots could puncture the protective wall and let in either the cold ocean or the airless vacuum of space! Interiors also have doors: in this game they are generally electronic and will open automatically if a model moves within 1” of the door’s front arc; these are referred to as "standard" doors. Certain areas of a facility may have doors that are locked and you can assign these as neutral or aggressive systems depending on their purpose. We recommend, in most cases, that locked doors are considered neutral and only in special circumstances would you find an aggressive system on a door. Hackers that are hardwired into the Grid or using remote access can open doors from a distance. Doors with a system attached have to be hacked as per the normal rules, but one standard door can be opened in the hacker’s turn without it being considered an action. If the hacker wishes to open two standard doors, he would have to sacrifice his action to do it.

Weapons that may deviate, such as grenades or missiles, are considered to explode on impact if they hit a wall or door.

ORDERS & SPECIAL ACTIONS

Any model can make a special action after it has completed its movement, but most orders must be given by a model with the Leadership ability. For teams, at least one model must be in leadership range of the model giving the order. Giving an order is not considered an action and no penalties are applied to the model giving it. A model may give multiple orders in a round at no cost.

Hold (Order)

A model or team may be given an order to hold its action on their turn. To hold its action, a model or team may not move, fire or perform any other action except hold and must be within 6" of a model with the Leadership skill to receive the order. Models that are holding an action can activate at any time during their opponent's turn. It is a good idea to turn their data card sideways or put a counter on the team that is holding, to help you remember. Models can hold until their next activation.

When you activate a team or model that is holding, everything must stop while they perform their action; your opponent must stop his turn where he is. Even if only one member of a team is activated, the hold action is removed from the entire team once its turn is completed. Your opponent may finish his turn once you have finished any held actions.

Models taking a held action can either charge into close combat up to a maximum range of 4", or take a ranged attack at a model in line of sight at -1 to their RCA.

If a holding team is hit by ranged fire, is in the burst radius of a template weapon, attacked in close combat, or forced to move for any reason such as a failed Nerve test, the held action is lost.

Concentrate Your Fire! (Order)

This is when all members of a team are firing at a single target and the total number of models in the team represents its RCA. A player makes an opposed range combat attack roll as normal. The damage for concentrated fire is either the standard damage for the weapon used or 1d6 per firer whichever is higher. If a model in the team has a different weapon than the others, it may not take part in concentrated fire.

Take Him Out! (Order)

A model with the Leadership ability may order another friendly model or team to ignore the nearest target and fire at what they consider a greater threat, but only if a successful morale test is passed. Otherwise, the models may only fire as normal at the nearest viable target.

Hide (Special Action)

A model may declare it is hiding by forfeiting its action for the turn, although it may still move up to its maximum MVE allowance, but it cannot run. A model must be within 1" of a terrain feature that is at least half the height of that model for it to be able to hide. Hidden models cannot be charged and cannot be targeted by ranged attacks that require line of sight.

Spotting a Hidden Model (Special Action)

You may attempt to spot hidden enemies on a model's action phase. The search area is designated from the models front arc only and the distance searched is reached by rolling 2d6; the total score is the distance in inches within which you can see hidden models. If a hidden enemy model is within this range it is considered spotted, but if it is not, then that model's turn is over and it may take no other actions. If a hidden model is spotted, you may attack it immediately. The model or team is no longer considered hidden after being spotted and all friendly models now know its position. Only one enemy model or team may be spotted, per model attempting to spot, per turn. If more than one model or team is within the search area, the nearest one is always the one spotted.

Models are automatically spotted if enemy models are within 6" of them and they have direct line of sight. A hidden model that is spotted is treated as prone during the turn it is discovered and therefore does not get to make an opposed roll against its finder.

GUARDS, GUARDS!

Certain assignments may require you to set up guards and/or guard patrols; even though these models are usually taken from a team, they act as independents while they are guards for the assignment.

Guards

Guards remain stationary at their assigned post, although they may try to spot approaching models by using the same rules as for spotting hidden models. They may only change their facing, but not their position.

Guard Patrols

Guard patrols move along a designated route. Counters are laid down, as described in the assignment, to mark out these patrol paths. Patrolling models must move at their maximum normal MVE allowance in the most direct manner possible to each counter. A model may ‘pause’ for one round at each counter point before resuming their patrol. A patrolling model may attempt to detect approaching enemy models by using the ‘Spotting a Hidden Model’ rules during the action phase of their turn.

Once an enemy model has been spotted, all guard models may move and act normally on their turn as it is considered the alarm has been raised.

Choosing your Guards

Only certain models from a force may be chosen to be guards. Unless specifically stated in the assignment, a crew may have 1 guard per 200 points of their total force. If a player has purchased SecuriClones, you may ignore this rule and use as many of them as you want for guard duty within the normal 25% of the forces’ total that is allowed for Mercs.

Allowed Guard Models

Only the models listed below are allowed to be on guard or patrol unless specifically stated in an assignment’s special rules:

Ronin: Shootist (Guard and Patrol), Fist (Guard and Patrol), Brick (Guard Only)

CSO: Trooper (Guard and Patrol), Peace Keeper Trooper (Guard and Patrol), Warbot (Guard Only)

APAC: Enforcer (Guard and Patrol), Panther Securibot (Guard and Patrol), TADS (Guard Only)

Dravani: Executors - may be accompanied by a Volkoda (Guard and Patrol), Lektra Vassals (Guard and Patrol), Brides of Lilith (Guard Only)

Mercs: SecuriClones (Guard and Patrol) - may be accompanied by guard dogs.

Guard models purchased for a crew that are designated as Guard and Patrol cost 25% less, rounded up, than they normally would. Guard Only models have their normal points cost.

Guard models that are attacked and destroyed in one turn have not had a chance to raise the alarm. Lay the model on its side and if another guard model comes within direct line of sight and 6” of it, the alarm is raised. The model may be moved and hidden to cover up the attacker’s tracks!

Certain weapons will immediately raise the alarm if used. These include rocket launchers, grenades (not smoke or gas), mini-guns, HMGs, flamethrowers, etc. Weapons like pistols, sniper rifles, beamers, flechetes and pulse guns are either silent or can easily be silenced. If the weapon a model is using is not in the above list, then use common sense and agree before the game begins as to whether it is silenced or not

If a model is destroyed within line of sight and 6” of another model and they are still in play at the end of the turn, then the alarm has been raised.

Until the alarm has been raised, all the defender’s models, except for guard models, are inactive which means they do not get a turn. Once the alarm has been raised, all models may act as normal and take their turn as normal during a round. Even if the alarm is raised on what would have been the last turn of the round, the defender immediately gets to activate his models in that round.

Once the alarm has been raised, certain other additional effects may come into play and these will be detailed in full in the Mission Manual.

COMBAT

Combat in Rezolution is not a static, one-sided event; it is fiercely competitive simultaneous action and calls for all players involved to take part in the success and survival of their models.

ATTACK!

Ranged combat traditionally involves shooting some type of projectile or energy at your opponent. Typical ranged combat weapons include pistols, machine guns, and rocket launchers, but it can also refer to more exotic weapons and craft attacks. A ranged combat attack can be made by any model that has a weapon with a range value. This is always an opposed roll with the attacker rolling 2d6 and adding their RCA attribute, and the defending model rolling 2d6 and adding their SAG. This represents the defender trying to avoid being hit either by evasive maneuvers or trying to make the best use of any available cover. Close combat works in a similar way, although instead of RCA against SAG, a close combat opposed roll uses both the combatants' CCA attribute. Certain ranged weapons, like pistols, may be used in close combat, while larger ranged weapons, like the mini-gun, hinder the model carrying it in melee. Full weapon details including range, damage and any special effects are found in this rulebook and on the relevant model's data card.

The air was thick with smoke and the taste of ozone cloyed at his nostrils from the incoming beamers — it was now or never. Denver leapt from behind the wall; he almost hesitated as he looked at the girl in front of him and then he remembered the surprised look on Pogue's face as the same girl had skewered him. Pushing doubt from his mind, he knew only one of them would survive this confrontation and he was determined it would be him. The pistols roared in his hands, echoing in the cavernous warehouse, but the girl was no longer in front of him. Before he could even register surprise, he felt the blade enter his back, expertly sliding between his ribs. Funny, he thought it would hurt more than this, as the blackness overwhelmed him …

PETER JOHNSTON

FIRE FIGHT: TAKE THEM DOWN!

Ranged Combat Attack Summary

1. Choose target
2. Confirm line of sight to enemy model
3. Check model is within range
4. Attack! Opposed roll, roll 2d6 and add your RCA to hit the enemy. Opponent rolls 2d6 and adds SAG to try and dodge the attack.
5. Determine outcome: the player with the higher total score has succeeded; a draw goes to the attacker, unless it is a critical success draw.
6. If a successful hit has been scored, work out damage.

Choosing a Target

When a model decides to make a ranged attack, it must first choose a target. A number of important factors come into play when deciding on your intended victim!

1. **Line of sight:** a model must have line of sight to its target, unless it is using a weapon capable of indirect fire.
2. **Range:** the model's target must be within range of the weapon. A player cannot measure until he decides to make the attack, so you must estimate the distance to the best of your ability. If the model is out of range when you fire, the attack automatically misses.
3. **Proximity:** if there are enemy models within 18" of the activated model or team, it must fire at the nearest target. If there are no enemies within 18", you may choose to fire at any model within line of sight and range.
4. **Orders:** a model or team within 6" of a model with the Leadership ability may be given an order to fire at any target within range, ignoring the proximity rule, as long as they pass a successful NRV test. Only one test is needed per team and the model with the highest NRV is used.
5. **Models with the Leadership ability** may ignore the nearest model rule and fire at any model they choose as long as they pass a successful NRV test as per the 'Take Him Out' order.

Hitting the Enemy – Dodging the Bullet

When you have chosen your target and made sure it is in range, you can attempt to hit them. The attacker rolls 2d6 and adds their RCA attribute and any other applicable modifiers to get their total score. The defender, that is the one being shot at, rolls 2d6 and adds their SAG and any other relevant modifiers. If the attackers roll equals or beats the defenders, then they have successfully hit them; if not, the defender has successfully dodged the incoming attack. A roll of double six, a critical hit, is usually always a hit - skills and special abilities cannot affect the outcome any other way. The ONLY way an attacker cannot hit the target by rolling a critical hit is if the defender also rolls a critical success and then the defender's roll takes precedence. When a model is hit, damage must be determined, and then a NRV test must be rolled to determine if the model is suppressed.

Peter Johnston

Watch Out Behind You!

When a model is attacked from its rear arc, it is less prepared to evade the incoming attack – in fact, it's very likely it is completely unaware! To represent this in your games, when making an opposed roll where your opponent's model is attacking from your rear arc, you only roll 2d6 and DO NOT add your SAG attribute. The attacking model MUST start its turn behind the defending model and at no time during its move cross into the defender's front arc for this rule to apply.

Jaime Jones

Automatic Weapons – Firing at Multiple Targets

Some weapons allow you to split your fire among multiple enemy models within a certain range and these weapons are classified as automatic on their profiles and data cards. To fire at multiple targets, divide the damage dice belonging to the weapon that is firing between your opponent's models, and then roll to hit each model as normal. If a model is hit, roll only the damage dice assigned to it when attempting to wound. Other models hit by automatic fire cannot be further than 4" away from the first model attacked and all other normal line of sight rules apply. You may only attempt to hit adjacent models when using an automatic weapon; you cannot skip a friendly model that is between two enemy models. If such a situation arises, you have to end your turn on the last enemy model or assign damage dice to the friendly model, so as to be able to continue onto the next enemy one!

Suppressing Fire

A model with an automatic weapon may attempt to lay down suppressing fire to cover its colleagues instead of making a ranged attack. Measure a 90° arc in front of the firing model and measure up to the maximum range of their weapons - ANY models within this area must make a NRV test to see if they are suppressed. No rolls to hit or damage are needed when using suppressing fire.

A suppressed model or team cannot move during its turn and must make a successful NRV test during the control phase at the beginning of the next round to be able to activate as normal. Held actions are automatically lost if a team or model becomes suppressed.

If a building is within the fire arc, either fully or partially, any models on or in it have to pass a successful NRV test.

Models in the suppressing fire arc, but behind blocking terrain such as buildings or high walls, do not have to test.

A model that is already suppressed and fails another suppression or morale test becomes panicked.

A suppressed model will defend itself as normal if a close combat attack is made against it.

Dual Weapons

Normally a model may only fire one weapon a turn, but some models are listed as having dual weapons on their data card. This means they may fire once with each weapon during an activation incurring a -1 modifier to their RCA score for each attack. A model may choose to fire only one of his dual weapons with no modifier.

They're Shooting at Me, Ma!

Models that are damaged by a ranged attack must pass a NRV test or become suppressed.

TAKE COVER LADS!

MODEL OUT OF COVER
MODEL IN COVER

Cover plays a vital part in any assignment, not only does it help you hide from your enemies, but it can also stop you being killed when they've found you! Cover is considered any terrain that does not block line of sight to a model. A model must be at least half-covered by the terrain and within 1" of it to gain the full benefits of cover. There are three different types of cover in Rezolution:

1. **Soft**: This includes such terrain features as bushes, a stack of cardboard boxes, or anything that makes the target more difficult to see, but does not affect the damage of the attack. For soft cover deduct -1 from the attacker's RCA score.

2. **Medium**: Fences, crates, temporary barriers, and even shantytown shacks are considered medium cover. Reduce the attacker's RCA score by -1 and add +1 to the defender's armor.

3. **Hard**: Walls, buildings, firmacrete pillars, bunkers and any terrain feature that can stop or block the damage of an attack. For hard cover deduct -1 from the attacker's RCA score and add +2 to the defender's armor.

If a model is further than 1" away from the terrain, but is still over 50% obscured from a model making a ranged attack at it, the attacker will suffer a -1 modifier to their RCA score.

If both models are within 1" of the same terrain piece neither receives any benefits from it when making ranged attacks at each other.

Thrown Weapons

Weapons such as grenades and shuriken have variable ranges depending on the model throwing them. To work out the range a model can throw a weapon, add 5 to their BDY attribute; this is the distance in inches the weapon can be thrown. Grenades can be thrown at any spot on the game table within range, as well as directly at models. Grenades that are not directly targeting a model deviate automatically from the target point up to the distance shown on the Deviation Dice, unless stopped by blocking terrain. If a weapon is thrown at a model, a standard opposed RCA roll is made against the target.

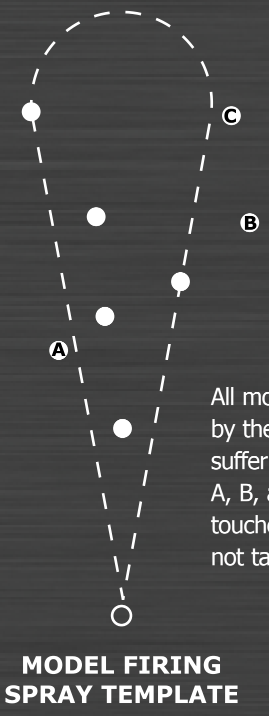
Template Weapons

Certain weapons like flamethrowers, shotguns and grenades, use a template to see who has been hit; these weapons can have a devastating effect and take down multiple targets at once. Any model that is touched by or under a template is considered hit and takes damage according to the weapons profile.

Most template weapons ignore any modifiers to their RCA score caused by cover. A model will still receive the benefits, if any, to their armor. A thrown grenade will ignore both the RCA and armor modifier, as it is assumed the model will be aiming at the general area its opponent is in and attempting to throw the grenade over a wall or even into a bunker structure, thus bypassing any protection that is offered.

There are three types of templates in Rezolution: spray, blast and smoke. The spray template is used for weapons like the flamethrower and is placed with the small end within the firing model's front arc. Any models touched by the template are hit automatically and take damage. The nearest enemy model to the attacking model must be at least half-covered by the template.

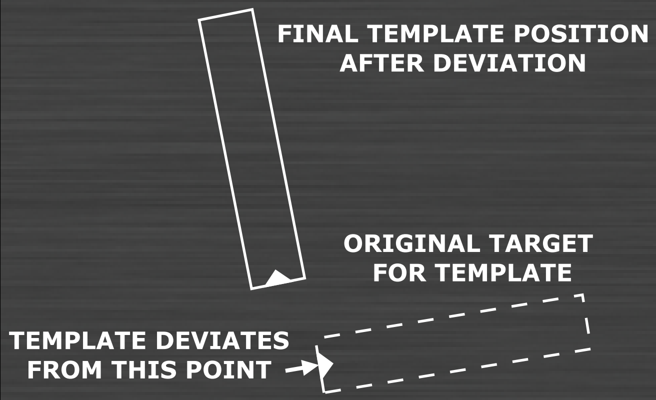
SPRAY TEMPLATE



All models touched by the spray template suffer damage. Models A, B, and C are not touched, so they do not take any damage.

A blast template represents a weapon that has a ranged area of effect such as grenades or missiles. To fire a weapon or use a power that has a blast template, roll to hit as normal and if the target is hit, then place the appropriate sized template over the model. Any other models covered or touched by the template are also hit and will take damage or suffer any special effects as described in its profile. A model that has successfully evaded a direct hit can still be hit in the blast area of effect. All models touched by a blast template whose BDY attributes are less than the unmodified damage dice of the weapon are knocked prone by the blast, if they survive.

SMOKE GRENADE DEVIATION



Smoke and gas grenades use a 5" long, 1" wide template. When you throw one, pick your point on the table (smoke and gas grenades cannot directly target models) and roll against a target number of 10 to see if it successfully lands on the target point. If successful, place the can end of the smoke template on your target point and position the 'smoke screen' how you want it. If you fail the target number roll, roll the Deviation Dice. Move the template the direction and amount in inches as normal, but position the template in the direction of the deviation arrow with the start of the template (the can end) at the deviation point.

Smoke and gas template weapons can have additional effects after they have been played. During the control phase, roll a d6 and refer to the results on the table below to see what happens.

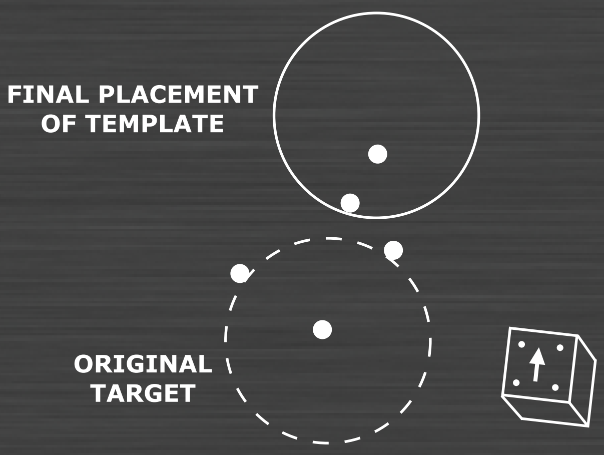
1-3	The cloud dissipates, remove template from play.
4-5	The cloud stays in play. Roll again on next control phase.

6	The cloud drifts. Count this as random movement. Models touched by the cloud suffer from any effects the gas causes as it moves over them. The cloud remains in play at its new position and players roll using this table again during the following control phase.

Indirect Fire

Certain ranged weapons are capable of indirect fire, which means they are able to fire over intervening obstacles and terrain. Indirect fire can also circumvent the line of sight rules; if a fellow team member or an independent can see a target, he can call it in to the model(s) with the indirect fire weapon(s), as long as he is no further than 6” away. Indirect fire is always considered a miss and will automatically deviate from its target point.

Blast Template Deviation



Deviation Dice shows direction and movement of template in inches.

Deviation

Any attack or action that uses an area effect template may deviate if it misses its intended target or if it does not have the range. The deviation point is either the original target or the weapon’s maximum range point in a straight line to it if it was out of range. To determine deviation, roll the Deviation Dice as near to the point of deviation as possible; the arrow is the direction and the numbers represent the amount in inches it will travel.

Elevation

A model making a ranged attack at an enemy that is situated on elevated terrain receives a -1 modifier to its RCA score. The terrain must be 3” or higher for this rule to apply. If attempting to engage an elevated model in close combat, the attacker must also deduct -1 from their CCA score. These modifiers only apply for the first round of close combat as it is considered both characters would be moving in a flurry of blows and any initial advantage would soon be lost.

Firing into Close Combat

A model may attempt to fire into close combat: if you wish to do so roll as normal, but subtract 3 from the attacking model’s RCA score.

If you miss your intended target, you may still hit others in the melee. Roll a d6 for each additional model in the combat and on a 1 or a 2 they have been hit. Only one model can be hit so stop rolling when the first is hit, unless the weapon was firing on full auto! If this was the case, divide the damage dice equally between all models except the original missed target, and roll as above to see if they were hit. Weapons that use a blast template deviate as normal if you miss.

Ranged attacks Against Prone Targets

Unlike normal ranged attacks, firing at a prone model is not an opposed test. A model that is prone is considered to have a target number of 10 for models firing ranged weapons at it from further than 6” away. If the attacking model is within 6”, then the target number is 5. If a model is prone and within 1” of a terrain feature, such as a wall, it cannot be targeted unless there is direct line of sight.

Criticals in Ranged Combat

A player who rolls a double 1, a critical failure, while making a ranged combat attack, has not only missed his target, but his weapon is also affected. Most guns are just considered jammed or out of ammo and can no longer be used for the rest of the game unless repaired. For weapons that use a template or blast marker, the effects are slightly more catastrophic and the weapon explodes. Place a 3” blast template over the model that attempted to fire and apply the effects of the weapon to all touched by the template. The model may survive, but that weapon is now considered destroyed and cannot be used for the rest of the game.

A critical success, double 6, in ranged combat not only means the attack hits, but you have hit a vital part of your enemy. Roll your damage as normal, total your successes and then double it! If a critical success has been scored with a template weapon, all models touched by it suffer the critical damage effects!

If the defending model rolls a critical success, the attack has missed as he narrowly dodges out of the way; the defending model's critical takes precedence over the attacker's in ranged combat, even if they roll a critical too. If the weapon uses a template and the attacker scores a critical success, place the template over the model then move the defending model that rolled a critical success to the edge of the template so that is not touched by it; roll the Deviation Dice to see which side the model should be placed. This represents the model leaping out of the blast area; all other models touched by the template are affected as normal.

A defending model that rolls a critical failure is automatically hit and if it survives the attack, is considered prone - as he desperately tried to dodge the incoming fire and tripped over his own feet!

If in the bizarre, but not unknown, circumstance that both players roll critical failures, the attacking player still misses, while the defending player goes prone, but is not automatically hit.

::: AND NOW A WORD FROM OUR SPONSORS :::

Tired of all that brushing?
Still not getting the smile you deserve?

Say hello to Nanopaste!

Just apply the required amount to your teeth and microscopic nanites activate instantly and do the cleaning for you.

No more having to remember to brush after every meal – the nanites stay active throughout the day, keeping plaque away.

{ Nanites dissolve after eight hours; re-application will be necessary. Side effects can include gum irritation, bleeding and swelling within the first week of using Nanopaste. Some cranial hemorrhaging may also occur. }

Now in new tropical burst flavor!

Nanopaste!

Another great product from the Xenone Corporation.

CLOSE COMBAT OR WHO HITS WHOM

Before close combat can occur, the model that wishes to attack must move within range of its opponent. This is usually within a ½" although some weapons having an extended reach allowing a model to attack without the threat of being hit back!

Close Combat Attack Summary

1 Choose target

2. Charge! Check line of sight and move charging model as far as its charge MVE will allow up to base-to-base contact with the intended target. Model may still move into close combat if it doesn't have line of sight, but may not make a charge attack.

3. Attack! Both players roll 2d6 and add their models CCA attribute to the roll. The model with the highest score has hit and damaged the other.

4. If a successful hit has been scored, work out damage.

Charging

A charge is a special type of movement that brings models into close combat with each other. On the activated model's turn he may declare a charge and attempt to move into close combat range of an enemy model; this is usually within a ½" of the model's base. A charge is normally a model's movement +4" in towards his target, but it must begin its move 3" or further away to gain the benefits of a charge move and have direct line of sight to its target. The target model must obey all the standard line of sight rules, such as nearest target. Models can never be ordered to charge any other model than the nearest viable one. Models cannot charge around corners or at models totally obscured by terrain features. Models with the swift ability can charge at up to double their move! On the turn a model has charged, if it hits in close combat, it receives an additional damage dice for that turn only. If the model fails to reach its intended target by less than 2", it must move the full amount of its charge in the direction of its intended target and then end its turn for the round; no other actions are allowed. If the charge is failed by 2" or more the model does not move at all, it must remain at its starting position and its turn is considered over.

Rolling to Hit

Once within attack range, both models make an opposed CCA roll and the model with the highest score has hit his opponent and rolls for damage as normal. If the roll is a draw, no damage has been done and the models will continue to fight on their next turn. After the first turn of combat, models may move up to ½” as long as they stay within melee range of their opponent, otherwise a free strike is given.

Damage and Fleeing

A model always gets to roll at least 1d6 damage dice if it hits in a close combat attack, even if normally a model’s armor would negate all effects.

If model takes damage in close combat, it must pass a morale test. If it fails, it is considered panicked and must flee immediately.

Parrying

Certain weapons, like swords, allow a model to parry or block an attack. If you have a parrying weapon and you want to use it to parry, you must declare before close combat has started that you are attempting to parry. The model attempting to parry receives an additional +2 to its close combat score for that turn, but if it beats the other model’s roll, no damage is done as all its effort was directed towards defending itself. The parrying weapon bonus can be added to your CCA score when trying to break off close combat voluntarily.

Multiple Combatants

In some cases more than one model may be attacking another; for every additional model after the first in close combat that round, they will receive +1 CCA and +1 damage dice if they hit. If additional models join the combat and the number of combatants on either side evens out, the odds will be reduced accordingly. If at all possible, a model will always try to fight one on one and will never ignore other enemy models in the combat.

For example: *you cannot have four models in close combat concentrating their attacks on one model when both sides have the same number of models in the combat. Even if some models are removed as casualties, count the original number of attacking models in that round.*

For example: *the third attacker attacking one enemy model in close combat receives +2CCA and an additional 2d6 damage dice if he hits. If another opponent joins the combat to help his teammate, this will be reduced as the odds even out.*

Free Strikes and Breaking Off

If a model wishes, it may attempt to fight its way out of close combat on its turn, but this must be declared at the beginning of that model’s turn. Close combat attacks are carried out with any model within combat range and the model attempting to move must make an opposed CCA test with every enemy model it is engaged with. It does not add its CCA attribute to the roll and other models in the combat roll as normal. If the model survives moving out of combat, it may move up to its normal MVE allowance, but may perform no other action that turn.

Close Combat

If a model moves within an enemy model’s close combat range, usually a ½”, and does not stop to engage in close combat, the enemy model may perform a free strike as it passes by. This is carried out in the same way as detailed in breaking off close combat, but with two exceptions: if the free strike misses the model whose turn it is, it may then carry on and finish its turn as normal; if the moving model is hit and survives, its turn ends there and is now considered in close combat with the enemy model(s).

Peter Johnston

Models that are panicked or fleeing and have to move out of close combat are dealt with in a similar way. The panicked model is considered to have a target number of 8 and does not get to make an opposed test against attackers. If the fleeing model survives, it must move 2d6” away towards the nearest friendly table edge.

Sometimes situations can occur where close combat is broken off automatically and can include a model becoming prone or certain unusual effects such as a model catching fire. When this occurs, the combat is automatically considered over and unaffected models that were considered to be in close combat may now move and take actions as normal.

Close Combat and Cover

If a model charges an opponent’s model that is behind cover, they receive no benefits from the charge and deduct -1 from its CCA score for that round only. After the initial charge, models in cover receive no additional benefits from it in close combat.

Jaime Jones

Prone Models in Close Combat

A model that engages a prone model in close combat does not need to roll to hit or to damage, as the prone model is automatically removed as a casualty. A model cannot engage a prone model if it is also engaged in close combat by a living enemy model, as survival instincts would dictate it deals with the deadlier threat first.

Criticals in Close Combat

If a critical failure is rolled in close combat, your opponent has automatically hit you and receives an additional 2d6 damage dice, the character having left itself open to a brutal attack. If both players roll critical failures then they both miss.

A critical success in close combat works the same as ranged combat, meaning the attack always hits and any successful damage rolls are doubled. If both players roll critical successes they have both hit each other!

Back Strikes

If a model is not in melee and is attacked in close combat from its rear arc, it is considered to be unaware of its attacker for at least the first turn. A model attempting a back strike may not have started in or entered the defending model’s front arc during that round. A defending model being attacked by a back strike rolls 2d6 and does not add its CCA attribute; if the attacker hits the model, then the number of damage successes is doubled!

If you roll a critical success on a back strike, the defending model is automatically removed from play.

If the model is already engaged with another model in close combat, the standard multiple combatants rule applies and no bonus is given for attacking in the rear arc, as the models are meant to be a swirling mass of bodies and blades!

HACKERS: THE WIRED WORLD

Jaime Jones

Hackers, those talented individuals, are an essential part of the underground world of 2175. With the aid of a neural interface, a brain box and a good board they can bend and shape the electronic world of the Grid to their advantage. The Grid is the evolutionary step of the Internet: a 'living' three-dimensional world that is comprised solely of electrons and data. Most of humanity is now equipped with a neural interface so they can plug directly in to the Grid and perform the functions they need - from banking and grocery shopping, to playing games and watching the latest entertainment shows. There are some, however, that use the Grid for other purposes, such as those that use information as currency, and buy, sell and steal in a digital underworld. These hackers are known by many names, "ghosts" being the most commonly used, although only the elite few are truly this. Even fewer can say they have actually met one because, like their namesakes, there is little evidence of their actual existence in the everyday world.

Hackers play a vital role in your crew as not only are they there to deal with the security systems and events during an assignment, but you can be sure they prep the field and gather mission data. Also, when everything is over, they will wipe any security recordings and clean up any digital clues that would reveal groups of heavily armed individuals were causing mayhem for fun and profit!

HARD-POINT TERMINALS: WIRED FOR LIFE

Certain critical systems can only be entered from hard-point terminals; this entails the model attempting to hack the system to be hardwired. To become hardwired, a model must make a normal move to a designated HPT during its turn and use its action phase to become hardwired. On the following control phase the model is allowed to act on the Grid. When a model is hardwired, it is completely unaware of the outside world and counts as a prone target and may not move. If the model is hardwired during the control phase, it may attempt to influence one system, download information or attack another hacker on the Grid. The model must declare it is disconnecting during the control phase and cannot take action on the Grid while it is doing so, although the model may then be activated as normal during the following round. You cannot disconnect after doing an action on the Grid during the control phase.

Having the HAK attribute allows models to access certain systems either for assignment purposes or to affect and/or control them during your turn. Models may take damage and be killed while working the Grid by neural feedback caused by other hackers or a system's defense programs. Damage is worked out the same way as normal, except any armor is ignored as the attack happens directly to the model's body! In general there are three types of systems you will encounter in Rezolution:

1. **Passive:** this is a system you can enter and affect/download without having to test once you are hardwired or within your boards range.
2. **Neutral:** this system has a designated target number of 10 unless otherwise stated in the assignment, which you must equal or beat by rolling 2d6 and adding your Hack attribute.
3. **Aggressive:** this system is aware and is trying to counter your attempts to violate it. This is an opposed test and your opponent should roll for the system and add the system's attribute that was either designated in the assignment or decided on by the players before the game, to the total. A failure causes 4d6 damage.

COMBAT ONLINE

Combat on the Grid is similar to combat in the real world with a couple of crucial exceptions. Attacking players roll an opposed test and add their Hack attributes and any modifiers for their board or programs they may be running. The winner is the player whose score is above their opponents, although if both players score the same it is a draw and both players receive d6 damage. For every point above your opponent's score, you receive a d6 of damage to roll against him.

Taking Damage on the Grid

Damage is worked out as normal when a model sustains it on the Grid or by remote access, except no armor modifiers are used as the model is receiving electrical feedback straight into its body!

Hacker combat example: *the first player wins the control roll and, as his Ghost is already hardwired, he decides to attack his opponent's Yuurei, who is also hardwired via a HPT. He then rolls 2d6, gets a 5 and a 6, and he now adds his Ghosts HAK attribute of 3 for a total score of 14. His opponent rolls 2d6, getting a 3 and 4, and adds his HAK attribute of 3 for a total score of 9 - and he loses by 5 points! Those 5 points are converted into damage dice, so now the first player rolls 5d6, needing 3s or better to damage the Yuurei, whose armor value of 1 is ignored as this is Grid combat and does not take place in the 'physi-*

::: AND NOW A WORD FROM OUR SPONSORS :::

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Or just the ravages of age?

Everybody has a time and everybody has to die...

Or do they?

Visit Elysium and cheat the reaper.
Sleep forever in an interactive dreamscape of your choosing.
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Elysium can provide whatever you desire, along with the greatest gift of all... Life.

cal' world. He rolls a 2,4,4,5 and a 3. That is enough to pound the Yuurei into the fatal damage section of its Damage Gauge, who now has to make a fatal damage roll to stay in the game. He rolls 1d6, getting a 2, and the Yuurei is removed from play as a casualty. Victory for the Ghost and he never moved from where he was sitting!

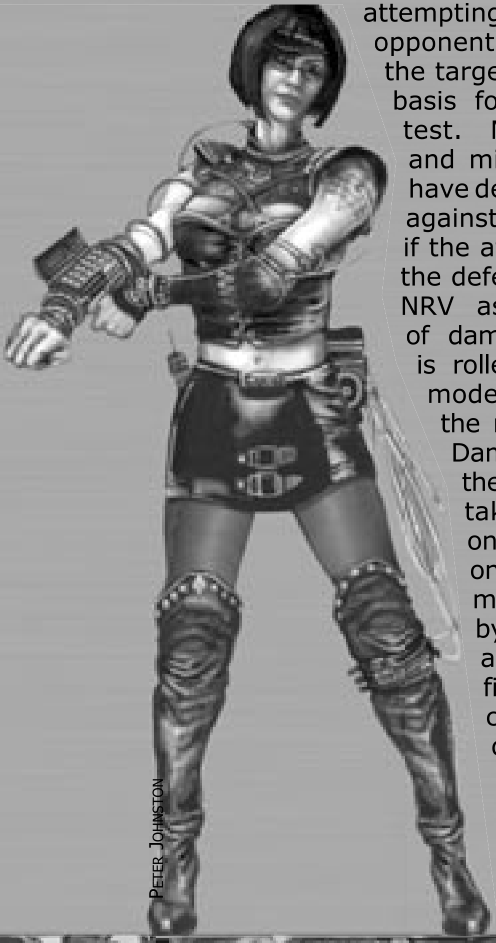
Multiple Hardwired Opponents

Multiple opponents online works the same as multiple close combat opponents; for each additional attacker add one to their Hack attribute and, if you are successful in your attack, you also gain an additional damage dice.

Remote Access

Some systems can be accessed without being hardwired into the Grid. To remote access, the model must have a board and be within its transmission range. The model cannot add its Hack attribute to the dice, but gets to add its board rating or use any programs it has to affect the outcome. Even remote access has its dangers, especially if you're trying to hack a bot's AI!

A model may attempt to remote access by making an opposed test and adding the model's remote board modifier to the roll. If remote accessing a system, standard target numbers apply, but if you are attempting to hack an opponent's model use the target's NRV as the basis for an opposed test. Most security and military systems have defense systems against such attacks, if the attack fails, use the defending model's NRV as the amount of damage dice that is rolled against the model attempting the remote access. Damage is exactly the same as for taking damage on the Grid. The only models that may be hacked by remote access are those classified as bots or cyborgs on their data cards.



If you succeed in remote accessing a model, you may immediately take a turn with it and it is now considered one of your crew. You may voluntarily relinquish control of the model during the control phase, but if you do not wish to do so, an opposed remote access test may be made by your opponent to remove you from the system. If he is successful, NO damage is done to your model, but it reverts to his control.

If you are attempting to taking over a bomb-bot, a sentinel gun or other automated defensives, a standard target number roll is required.

When taking over an automated system, such as a sentinel turret, the hacker's attributes are used instead of the models; all other attributes remain the same.

A model using remote access is not considered prone, but it may perform no other actions apart from moving at its standard MVE allowance.

You may only control one system or model at a time by remote access; attempting to control another one will automatically release the current one you are controlling, whether you are successful or not.

An opponent may attempt to remove you from a system by remote access; this operates exactly as described in the Combat Online section with the addition that the player is forcibly disconnected. A model cannot be forcibly disconnected when they are hardwired to a hard-point terminal.

Remote access can be used to attack models that are wired to the Grid. The player attempting this uses only the board modifier and not the model's Hack attribute for the opposed test, while the player with the model on the Grid may operate as normal

You cannot attempt to attack an opponent's hacker model by remote access if they are not on the Grid or hacking another model or system.

A team's hacker can still be of use even after they are dead, as any information that it retrieved is stored in its brain box and crews may fight over the body, or more precisely the head, of a dead hacker to attempt to complete their assignment! If you have another friendly hacker on the Grid or within remote board range, any relevant information can be transferred with a standard passive system test. It is considered for game purposes that a crew's hackers have the passwords necessary to access each other's brain boxes in case of such an emergency. For point-based games such as "King of the Grid," any points that a hacker has received are not lost and remain with the crew even if the hacker dies and do not have to be transferred as detailed above. For assignments that you and your friends create, make sure you agree before hand on how 'data transfers' will occur.

MIND GAMES: USING THE CRAFT

A few especially gifted individuals are able to use the power of their mind to influence events or even target others. These individuals are equally feared and venerated; no one knows how many are out there or how powerful they could become…

Craft attacks or abilities are considered actions and normally take place on a model's turn after movement; line of site is still needed for physical attacks, although not for telepathic-based powers. A model's Craft powers and effects are detailed on their data card and in their character profile in this book.

Ranged Craft Power Summary

1. Choose target
2. Opposed roll: roll 2d6 and add your models CRFT attribute, while the defending model will roll 2d6 and add their SAG, if it is a physical attack, or 2d6 and their NRV, if it is a telepathic one. The attacker's opposed roll must also be equal or over the target number following the name of the power on the data card, otherwise the attempt is unsuccessful even if you have beaten your opponent's roll. If no target number is given, the power automatically works.
3. If successful, work out damage and/or effects listed for the power.

Using Your Inner Abilities

Physical ranged craft attacks are carried out as a normal opposed ranged combat attack, with the exception that the attacker uses his CRFT attribute instead of his RCA.

Craft powers that are used in close combat are worked out as per a ranged craft attack, with the exceptions being that the Craft user substitutes their CCA for CRFT attribute; powers with an area effect not centered on the caster cannot be used in close combat attacks. In all other respects models obey the rules laid down in the Close Combat section.

Telepathic attacks are carried out in a similar fashion, except your opponent adds his NRV attribute to their opposed score. Telepathic attacks do not need line of sight and are not stopped by blocking terrain, although the target model(s) must be within the ability's range. A draw in a telepathic attack always goes to the defender. Telepathic Craft powers have no effect on bots or cyborgs.

Most Craft powers have a target number you have to roll equal or above for the ability to work. Once you have rolled your opposed roll and added your CRFT attribute, check your data card to see if it equals or beats the number immediately following the name of the power. If so, the power has worked as described; if not, the model has failed to harness the powers of the Craft and his turn is immediately over with no further effect, even if he managed to beat his opponent's opposed roll.

A critical failure while using a Craft power automatically causes 1 point of damage as the user's mind cannot take the strain of the energy they are trying to unleash. A critical success always hits or succeeds.

You cannot make a telepathic craft attack against an enemy model with Craft powers; if you wish to attack them telepathically, you have to engage in a mind war!

JAIME JONES

Mind Wars

If two models with the CRFT attribute are within 18" of each other, they may engage in a mind war; they do not need line of sight to do this, they just need to be in range.

Both players make an opposed test using their CRFT attribute; for every point over the other player's score, the winner deals 1 point of damage to his opponent. If the duel is a draw, both models receive 1 point of damage!

AND THE DAMAGE DONE

Once you have successfully hit your opponent's model with an attack, you must work out whether you have damaged that model. In Rezolution there are two types of damage, physical and energy. Although damage is handled the same way, certain types of weapons can be more effective against certain models or have additional effects.

Damage Summary

1. Penetration: deduct the attacking weapon or power's penetration value from the defender's armor.
2. Armor: remove the number of dice equivalent to the remaining armor value from the total number of damage dice
3. Damage: roll damage dice; each dice that scores equal or above the defending model's BDY attribute takes one block of damage on the Damage Gauge. For every 6 scored, roll an ADDITIONAL d6 damage dice.
4. Fatal damage: if a model receives fatal damage, roll 1d6 and consult the fatal damage table; if all the model's damage blocks are filled, remove it from play.
5. Suppressed: if a model has survived, but received damage, the player has to make a morale test to check for suppression or panic.

Close combat: if a model is hit by its opponent, it always receives 1d6 damage even if the modified number of damage dice is 0.

Physical: This generally refers to damage from a weapon or power that uses kinetic force to produce an effect, such as guns, melee weapons or good old fists!

Energy: This refers to weapons or powers that cause damage by electrical, fire or other means; such weapons include lasers, flamethrowers and pulse guns. On models that are designated as bots or cyborgs, penetration is higher for some energy weapons; this is usually denoted on their data card as this 1(2), the number in the brackets being the penetration value for bots and cyborgs. Energy weapons are always denoted with their statistics as certain additional effects may apply.

Penetration

Most weapons have a penetration value. A weapon's penetration value is subtracted from the defender's armor BEFORE that model's armor value is deducted from the damage dice. Any remaining armor points after a weapon's penetration value has been taken into account are subtracted from the damage dice as normal.

Armor

Armor is essential to the modern operative and comes in many forms, from invisible thin linings of impact gel in everyday clothing, to full-body ceramic and composite plate. Sometimes a model can be fully armored and not even look like it, but under their skin they have had their ribs grafted or dermal plating surgically implanted. There are many ways in 2175 to be protected without having to walk down the street looking like a medieval knight! A model's armor rating is shown on the top left of their data card; other effects can add or subtract from this number.

Most models in Rezolution have some type of protective armor or even scaled hides! Armor helps to protect models and reduce the amount of damage they take. A model's armor value is subtracted from a weapon's damage dice before the damage roll is made and is usually displayed in the top left hand corner of its data card.

For example: *Mai has been successfully hit by an enemy model using a heavy pistol; a heavy pistol does 4d6 damage and has a penetration of 1. Mai's BDY attribute is 3 and she has an armor rating of 2, this is reduced to 1 by the pistol's penetration value leaving a total armor of 1 which is then subtracted from the damage dice; her opponent now needs to roll a 3 or better on 3d6 to damage her.*

Peter Johnston

Damaging a model

To damage a model you must roll equal or above that model's BDY attribute on the weapon's damage dice. For each dice that scores equal or above the target model's BDY attribute, 1 point of damage is marked on the model's Damage Gauge. A roll of 6 is always a success and enables you to roll an additional dice. As long as you keep rolling sixes, you can keep adding dice to the damage results and some of the more powerful weapons enable you to add extra dice on lower numbers! However, you must always equal or beat the target's BDY to actually score a wound. Once you have the final total of your damage score, this is marked on the model's damage tracker.

Certain weapons also have special effects such as setting the target on fire, so make sure you read the profile carefully to gain the full benefit of your armory.

For example: *Mai has been hit by a heavy pistol, damage 4d6 P1. Her armor of 2 minus the weapons penetration of 1 reduces the damage to 3d6, her BDY is 3. Her opponent now needs to roll 3 or higher on each dice to damage her. He rolls a 2, a 4 and a 6. He's scored two points of damage already, but as he rolled a 6, he can now roll an additional dice. The additional die scores a 3, another success! Mai takes a total of 3 blocks of damage from the shot. The roll of a 2 as it was under Mai's BDY attribute is discounted and has no effect.*

The Damage Gauge

A model's overall health is shown on their Damage Gauge as illustrated on their data card. Make sure your data cards are in a PVC sleeve and use a dry erase marker to keep track of damage; after a game you can wipe it clean and the original card is not damaged.

For every point of damage taken, a box should be marked off, starting on the first clear box on the left and working right. Towards the end of the Damage Gauge, a model may begin to receive fatal damage – this is represented by a box with a negative number in it; whenever a model receives damage in these boxes, they must take a fatal damage test.

Once a model receives fatal damage, roll a d6 on the chart below and apply the results.

Fatal Damage Chart

1-2	**Dead** Model is removed from play
3-4	**Stunned** The model is now stunned and prone. Roll again in the following control phase
5-6	**Can't Keep a Good Man Down** Apply any modifiers listed on your Damage Gauge to MVE, RCA, CCA & NRV

If the model passes the test, it must apply any modifiers listed in the Damage Gauge box it is in. These modifier's effects apply to MVE, RCA, CCA and NRV by the amount indicated, but apart from this it may continue to take part in the game as normal. Once a model's final box is marked, it is considered either dead or out of action and removed from play.

For example: *Mai has been hit and taken 3 blocks of damage, she is now in the fatal damage section of her Damage Gauge. She rolls her fatal damage roll on 3-6; she could still be in the game though would have to apply the minus modifier to her MVE, RCA, CCA and NRV, greatly affecting her effectiveness in the game. Unfortunately she rolls a 1 and is removed from the table as a casualty.*

SPECIAL DAMAGE EFFECTS

Fire

Some weapons can cause models to catch fire; if, during rolling damage for a weapon that causes fire, you roll one or more natural 6s, the target is considered to have ignited! A model that is on fire may not activate or do anything until the following control phase, when it may attempt to put itself out on a d6 roll of 4-6. If the model rolls a 1-3, it automatically takes a point of damage with no armor modifiers allowed and if it survives, it will then move in a random direction during the compulsory movement section of the control phase. You may make another attempt to put the model out in the next control phase. A model on fire is considered to have a target number of 8 for ranged attacks against it, due to the wild flailing and unpredictability of its movement; it does not get to make an opposed roll on its SAG. No model may attempt to attack it in close combat due to its erratic movement. Friendly models may attempt to help put the fire out and for every friendly model in base contact during the control phase, the target number is lowered by 1 to a minimum of 2. A roll of 1 is always considered a failure.

Poison

Some models carry weapons that are poisoned, so if a model takes damage from a poisoned weapon, the toxins on the weapon have infected the victim. During the following control phase roll a d6; on a score of 1-3 the infected model automatically takes 1 point of damage and must check for poison again on the following control phase; on a score of 4-6 the poison has no effect and the model is no longer considered poisoned.

YOU'VE GOT A NERVE

A model's Leadership ability and his strength of mind are very important in Rezolution and the higher its NRV attribute the better it is in these matters. NRV is used for a number of different tests, which affect your models in very different ways. To make a successful NRV test, a model or team must roll 2d6, add its NRV and any applicable modifiers, scoring 10 or higher to succeed.

Teams only need to make one morale-based test for all its members; the model with the highest NRV attribute is used for the roll.

1. Morale

Situations like suppressing fire or horrific models can cause an independent model or team to make a morale-based NRV test. In most situations, if you fail a morale test your models become suppressed; if an already suppressed model fails another morale test, they automatically become panicked and flee. Models that are in close combat cannot become suppressed; if they fail a morale test they automatically panic and flee.

When to Take a Morale Test

- if a model or a team is hit by suppressing fire.
- when a model takes damage in close combat.
- when a team loses 25% or more of its current members in a round.
- when a team has lost 50% or more of its starting members.
- when a model is being attacked by or attempting to attack in close combat, a model that is considered horrific. Models need only test once per unique horrific model.
- when a crewmember with the Leadership skill dies within 6" of friendly crew model; Mercs do not count as part of a crew and are therefore unaffected. (just one of the reasons why they always demand payment upfront!)

Certain orders or situations may require models to pass an NRV test to carry it out.

2. Rally Test

You can attempt to rally suppressed or fleeing models during the control phase by making a NRV test. If successful, the models may move and act as normal again starting that round, but if failed, then no additional penalties are incurred, but they remain suppressed or fleeing.

3. Telepathic Attacks

A model with Craft abilities must make an opposed test using their CRFT attribute against the defending model's NRV to affect them with telepathic Craft powers. To recover from a telepathic attack, a model must make a successful NRV test in the control phase to shake off the influence of the Craft user.

Suppressed and Panicked Models

A model or team that fails a morale test and becomes suppressed cannot move during its turn, although they may still make ranged attacks and defend themselves in close combat as normal. To regain control, the player must make a successful NRV test at the start of the next round during the control phase to be able to activate them as normal. Held actions are automatically lost if a team or model becomes suppressed.

If the model is already suppressed and fails another morale test, it will become panicked and flee immediately. A fleeing model moves 2d6 towards its starting sector or the nearest table edge. Until the player regains control of the models or they leave the table, all further movement is considered compulsory and happens during the control phase. The player may still attempt to rally them during the control phase and before any compulsory movement is made. A panicked model will attempt to exit the game area as fast as possible by the nearest possible route, but will never move towards enemy models to do so.

A player always gets at least one chance to rally their models. Models that become panicked and whose flee move would make them exit the table immediately, are placed at the table's edge so a rally roll can be made during the following control phase. If that is failed, they flee off the table as normal.

A model cannot become suppressed when it is engaged in close combat; if it is forced to make a morale test and fails, it instantly becomes panicked and flees.

Criticals in Morale

Critical failures and successes also apply to morale-based tests with the following effects. If a team or independent rolls a critical failure for a morale-based test, they become panicked and must immediately flee. Rolling a critical success on a morale test means they do not have to make another morale-based NRV test for the whole round, no matter what the cause.

Peter Johnston

Peter Johnston

Light streamed across the desolation as the steel door at the tunnel entrance opened; the shadows stretching out from the dome, over the security wall and beyond to the few hundred feet of waste ground that surrounds all cities. This was the Forbidden Zone that provided a security barrier between the wealthy corporate and commercial domes, and the impoverished outer slums plagued by crime and overcrowding. Security forces patrol the Zone, also called No Man's Land, stopping any trespassers. Some say the many domes that make up the cities are there to protect the citizens from the pollution-filled air, but others say they are there to keep in pollution of a different kind.

As the door opened fully with a clunk, the train sped out through the gap and over the wall, cutting through the smoke and fog from the exhaust ports carrying waste out of the city. The single rail seemed to creak and bend as the train passed; each pylon that held it above the ground straining to keep the train moving, then releasing the strain as it passed by.

As the train passed over the Forbidden Zone and swept into the midst of the decaying concrete structures, eager eyes watched its passage.

"This is it boys 'n' girls, our man's aboard that train. Fire your engines, time to collect on some debts."

The emphatic approval from the gathered tribe was almost drowned out by the roar of the engines from their diverse array of bikes. The Jet Junkies were just one of the many speed tribes that lived in the outer cities, but they were, by far, the boldest. They made frequent lightning raids into the cities, usually ending in running battles with the security forces, but this time their target was specific and it was on the train in front of them.

The bikes that swung out and headed toward the train were not the normal, out-of-the-showroom models seen in the cities, these were customized beyond recognition. Occasionally, if you looked closely, you could see a familiar logo, but these were usually the first things to go, replaced by the same tribal artwork that could be seen on the leather jackets or tattooed on the arms and bodies of the tribal members. Metal plates had been welded onto the frameworks to give greater protection from shrapnel and gunshot when the inevitable gun battles started.

The Jet Junkies swept towards the train, rubbish and paper swirling in their wake, and the bikes increased their speed as they tried to match that of the train. Terrified faces looked out of windows, but who cared about them - anyone traveling around the slums this late at night was a fair target.

Once bikes and train were in sync, the signal was given and the operation began.

Each bike was switched to auto, the onboard computer taking over control while the rider unharnessed the MagnoGrap 4000. With electronic ease, the autopilots kept the bikes positioned alongside the train and each rider aimed and fired. Steel cables snaked out and magnetic hooks connected with the sides of the train and stuck fast. The riders braced themselves for the jolt that was to come and pressed the retract switch. Pulled off their bikes, each rider slid up the side of the train as the MagnaGrap 4000 retracted the steel cable. Oblivious, the train continued into the night, Jet Junkies swinging beside it as they electronically crawled their way to the roof.

Not everything went smoothly as Brak, not the greatest marksman in the Jet Junkies, miscalculated. His grapple had crossed over that of Merko and the first and last thing that Brak saw was Merko's steel cable crossing his path, just before it sliced cleanly through him and his two pieces disappeared into the night in a flash of blood and entrails.

The successful raiders reached the train sides with practiced ease and, without further incident, used the hooks in their gloves to clamber up onto the roof.

"Dedog, get your butt over here now and open this hatch," yelled the leader, Draxil Tarrant.

Dedog, who looked like he was wearing a coat many sizes too big for him, scrambled across the roof and knelt down in front of the hatch. Connecting a lead he pulled out from the side of his old and battered wrist board, he tapped the keys frantically, his nervousness at Draxil's presence very apparent. Draxil just laughed, fear of him was one thing that helped him keep his leadership, successful missions was the other.

With a hiss the hatch opened.

"Back," Draxil shouted as he pulled Dedog away from the entrance, nearly tipping him over the edge. There was a flash and a loud bang as a ball of flame shot upwards from the hatchway.

"Next time you'll be toast, idjit. Now get out the way and let's do what we come here for," Draxil signaled his eager minions to enter the hatchway.

One by one, with weapons drawn, they dropped down to the corridor below.

Once inside, they split into two groups, each going in opposite directions.

At the end of the corridor Draxil could see the door into one of the main carriages. It was chaos; people were running around in panic as even if they had not seen the bikes swoop down, they had definitely heard the hatchway explosion.

Unnecessarily kicking the door in, Draxil stepped through the shattered entrance, braced himself and fired three rounds into the ceiling.

The impact was instantaneous.

"That's better, now sit. This train is under the control of the Jet Junkies. Give me any trouble and you'll be shot. So listen up, as I mean what I say."

For one man it was too much. Turning round, he tried to run out of the door at the end of the carriage. He did not get far. Draxil's gun rang out once and the man's back exploded into a mess of blood and bone as the bullet ripped through his body. He staggered one step, propelled by its force, and then crashed to the ground.

"Anyone else not listenin'?"

Silence.

The Jet Junkies moved through the train, searching for their prey. This did not stop some members from taking whatever took their fancy from the cowering passengers they passed. Trinkets and currency were willingly given when demanded - the sight of the blood covered body being all the incentive that was needed.

As they neared the last carriage, Draxil spotted his goal. Moving through his men, his confidence high and his twin revolvers resting back against his shoulders, Draxil stood in front of the man he was looking for.

"So here you are, the great Mr. Lever," Draxil spat out through clenched teeth as the rest of the tribe crowded behind him, sniggering in anticipation. "It's been a long time, too long. Good evening's trade? What you got for me, hey? Drugs? Weapons? Some nice new corp tech? Not that it really matters, does it, as we've got some catching up to do, you and me. Thought you left me for dead that time, 'ey? Well, surprise - here I am alive and kickin'. I swore we'd meet again and I always stick to my word."

Lever folded his paper and looked up for the first time since they'd entered his carriage and smiled.

"Draxil Tarrant. I should have known it would be you when I heard the first explosion. Only you would be so bold - and stupid to attempt hijacking a train at these speeds," Mr. Lever stood up and turned towards Draxil, exuding an air of disinterest in the whole affair. "How is the leg now? I see you have a new one; I hope you didn't pay too much for it?"

Draxil snarled, "Not as much as you are now. Get 'im."

On Draxil's signal, his eager gang members surged forward with weapons raised.

What happened next was a blur.

Two figures that had been seated a few rows away, leapt up. In one fluid motion their long dark coats were shrugged off their shoulders, their weapons drawn, and with a single leap they were over their seats. Head over heels in a graceful cartwheel, they swirled through the air, feet only lightly touching the tops of seats as they passed.

Before the Junkies knew what was going on, one man was down on the ground, decapitated by the sword that sliced through air and bone around him. Gunfire blasted out and was silenced as the arm holding the weapon left its body and dropped to the ground.

The windmill of rushing swords continued as the two Ronin sliced through the Junkies, cartwheeling through the air in a swirl of death and destruction. Only Draxil remained standing, his silent guns in his hands, stunned by the deadly speed of the attack.

The Ronin moved silently towards him, but Lever raised his hand and the two men stopped, standing with swords drawn behind Draxil.

"If you will?" Lever pointed to Draxil's pistols; without raising his eyes, he sullenly handed them over.

Lifting the guns to examine them, Lever sighed, "This will never do, you haven't been oiling and cleaning these daily, Drax. I'm very disappointed. These were a gift from a very close friend and to see them mistreated in this way… well, it almost breaks my heart. These always were my favorites, I thought I'd lost them for good. A touch noisy perhaps, but not many hand guns can blow a man's limb clean off - but then of course you'd know all about that?" Mr. Lever waved the guns towards Draxil's lower body.

Draxil dropped to his knees, "Look, I was always loyal to you, always did what I was hired to do".

"Loyal, now that is funny from you. My dear boy, you are only loyal to your own skin, a trait that I don't admire in hirelings and when you failed me, you nearly cost me my life. You were very lucky it only cost you your leg."

"Screw you. You're a bastard, Lever, you set us up and you know it."

"My, my, the fire's back in your eyes; that's the Drax we know and love, hey boys. Now let me tell you something, if you and your group of motorized morons were any good, we all could have got in and out intact as planned. We also know the leak came from your side, someone wanting to make some extra credits without doing the work. Sound like someone we know?"

"That's what you say. Just words, no proof. You suits can't be trusted, we all know that. Thinkin' you're better than us. I've wiped better stuff of my boots than you, Lever."

"That's always been your problem, Drax, you get so emotional, it's just not professional. You've really got to understand it's nothing personal, it's just business." The guns bucked once in Lever's hands, the boom reverberating around the wrecked carriage.

"Oh dear… when am I going to learn not to stand so close." Lever glanced down at his blood-spattered suit. He looked towards the impassive Ronin, "This was hand-tailored by robots you know and you wouldn't believe how expensive that is these days!"

THE
MISSION
MANUAL

CONFIDENTIAL

THE MISSION MANUAL

Langstrom looked out at the burning towers. The streets below were flecked with searchlights from the swarming Barracudas, "Something's happening Barrister."

"Sir?"

"Can't you feel it. Damn it man, haven't you noticed the increased reports, we're stretched to breaking point. We're teetering on the edge, Barrister. I fear we may already be over it."

"There has been an increase in Ronin activity, sir, but the board says it's just inter-crew war."

"The board? You are new aren't you, Barrister. Listening to the board will get you killed. And as for Ronin, they're far too easy a scapegoat. No it's something more, I can smell it," Langstrom coughed violently, his large frame shaking under the unexpected assault.

"Are you alright, sir?"

"Fine, fine, just the late night air sometimes gets to me." His reply was barely audible as he rubbed his hands to erase the small flecks of blood left on his gloves. He looked again at the destruction below.

"Would you like me to take you down to the scene now, sir?"

"No, I need to get some real information. Turn off the transponder and kill the lights, we're heading over the wall… unofficially. Signal the team to prep for a drop. Somebody's stirring things up and I intend to find out who."

So you have chosen your crew and are confident in their abilities; now you are eager to prove yourself on the field of battle in the 22nd century. But there are no literal fields in modern warfare; most battles take place in the confined and sterile surroundings of corporate domes, claustrophobic space stations, isolated research facilities or even the ruins of the outer cities. The environment is as hostile as your opponent and a careless shot is just as likely to cost the life of your crew as that of your enemy…

In Rezolution, battles are not waged because opposing forces just happen to run into each other; each encounter is based on specific instructions and the agenda of the faction. Random fighting can occur, but few wish to waste valuable resources unnecessarily. The mission is the key and the assignment must be completed at any cost. For each game, a points value should be established before the game table is set up; for most two-player missions this will be between 300 and 1,000 points, although larger games are perfectly acceptable. Once the size of the game has been established, you and your opponent should choose an assignment. Some require players to take the role of either the attacker or defender and for this players can either choose or roll for it, with the player scoring highest on a d6 roll choosing which part he wishes to play. Success in a mission is not just a matter of wiping out an opponent! Each assignment either awards victory points or declares the winner based on objectives achieved. Make sure you read the briefing carefully or you may find yourself winning on body count only to lose the game. And remember, most of the operatives in these clandestine games are but pawns to their master's will and failure is rarely tolerated…

Each assignment is broken down into these basic parts:

Briefing

The briefing will tell you all you need to know about the objective your crew needs to carry out during this mission, including the amount of victory points they are worth.

Objectives

What you need to do to win.

Set-Up

This details how you and your opponent will deploy your models and any essential terrain on the game table. Terrain should be placed by players alternating the placement of terrain pieces on the gaming table; once this is done, any special terrain pieces such as hard-point terminals should then be placed. Players should roll for the choice of sides at the beginning of the game after all the terrain has been set up.

Game Length

This tells you how many rounds the mission will last.

Special Rules

If the mission uses any special rules they will be detailed here.

Each of the assignments given in this chapter are a template for your game and should be adapted as you see fit. Following the Special Ops section is an optional rules section on customizing your assignments by adding environmental effects, additional agendas and other dangers that the world of Rezolution holds! It is best to have played at least a few games using the standard mission templates before adding any supplementary material so you have a chance to become familiar with the basic rule system. It is recommended that first time players play the Firefight assignment a couple of times before moving on to the other assignments as it is a great way to get used to the core mechanics of the Rezolution game system (Firefight is fun no matter how experienced you are!). Once you are familiar with the basics of the round sequence and model movement and actions, it is easy to add in some of the more advanced rules and situations.

A Note on Terrain and the Placement thereof

Terrain is very important in Rezolution and you should make sure there's a lot of it! The battlefields of 2175 are not open fields where the forces line up and march into each other. Those types of battle belong firmly in the past and have little or nothing to do with modern, let alone futuristic, warfare and combat. Instead you are packed down deadly alleyways; fighting from cover to cover, trying to gain ground and suppress your enemies. These environments are fraught with danger and paranoia, where the wrong decision could mean the destruction of a model or team. When placing terrain, alternate with your opponent and then when you are finished laying out your table, each player should remove a piece of terrain placed by his opponent; this helps ensure the fairest possible table set-up. Each Rezolution Starter Set comes with a CD-ROM of printable terrain which will give you a professional looking futuristic game table with the minimum of effort.

TERMINAL J-19

Jaime Jones

STANDARD ASSIGNMENTS

FIREFIGHT

Maguffin dropped to one knee, drawing his Python heavy pistol and squeezing the trigger without thinking. The rest of his crew were already taking up positions and beginning to return fire. He didn't know where these guys had come from, but if it was a fight they wanted, a fight was what they were going to get!

Briefing

Opposing forces have met and only one will walk away!

The winner is the player with the most points left on the table after the game ends.

Recommended points' values for games should ideally range between the values listed below depending on how many players are involved:

2 Players 300 -1,000 points

3 Players 300 - 750 points

4 Players 300 - 500 points

Objectives

Destroy them. Destroy them all!

Set-Up

Players should set up no further than 10" onto the game table and at least 12" from either corner.

Game Length

6 Rounds

Special Rules

None.

INCURSION

Rory's voice echoed in his skull, "We can't hold them much longer. We're going to have to abort!"

"Five more seconds, just five more seconds," Danex cancelled the auto-zip in his NI to increase the download speed and was suddenly hit by the uncompressed data torrent. His body jerked and thin lines of blood dribbled from his eyes, nose and ear.

"Done."

Unplugging his line, he let it zip back into his implant. He tried to stand, but his legs betrayed him. Crumpling in a disheveled heap on the floor, he murmured as he fell,

"Done."

"Is he alive?"

"Got a pulse, weak, but its there. Cardon, carry him out, we got what we came for. Let's just hope Danex makes it to payday!"

Briefing

All you have to do is get in, get hardwired and get the data - how difficult can that be?

One player must choose to be the attacker, while the other is the defender.

The attacker must have at least one model on their crew with the Hack attribute.

The attacker wins by getting the data off the table; the defender wins by stopping them.

Objectives

Reach the terminal, download the data, and get the information off your side of the board.

Set-Up

One plus d3 hard-point terminals must be set up on the table. The terminals must be placed alternately by the players, beginning with the defender. They cannot be placed within 14” of either sides’ starting sectors and must be 6” or further away from each other. Terminals are considered Armor 2, with a Damage Gauge of 3.

Game Length
Variable; game automatically ends after the end of the seventh round if it has not before.

Special Rules
After the completion of the fifth round and every round thereafter, the players must take turns to roll a d6 and compare it to the chart below.

Players must decide before the game starts whether the system they will be attempting to access is passive, neutral or aggressive.

1	**Game Over** automatic security protocols lockdown the complex and all hope of escape.
2-4	**Continue Play.**
5-6	**Continue Play.** Defending player may bring in up to 50 points of additional team models from their starting sector if they have them available.

ASSASSINS!

Briefing
Your rise to prominence has been fast and has drawn unwanted attention and jealousy from others. They see you as a problem, a problem that needs to be fixed…fixed permanently!

Objectives
The attacker must destroy their opponents’ leader, while the defender must protect them at all costs! The winner is the player who succeeds.

Set-Up
The defending player must set up his crew’s leader within 8” of the center of the table, with one of his teams or one independent model placed within 8” of the leader. The players then alternate placement of their models anywhere on the table. The players cannot place models within 12” of their opponents.

Game Length
Five rounds

Special Rules
Game ends automatically if the defending crew’s leader is destroyed.

KING OF THE GRID

Briefing
Both crews must race to erase falsely planted data that shows them in a less than favorable light, while at the same time upload incriminating evidence on their opponent!

Objectives
The first player to reach 7 points is the winner.

Set-Up
Three hard-point terminals must be set up on the game board. The first must be placed in the center of the table. Each player then takes a turn to place 1 additional terminal up to 8” away from one already placed on the table. Terminals cannot be placed within 10” of a players set-up sector

Game Length
Variable (See Objectives)

Special Rules
For every round a model with the HAK attribute is hardwired to a terminal, they gain 1 victory point as they download information. If they do not initiate combat or any other actions on the Grid that round, they will also gain an additional 1 point. Models that defend against a Grid attack still gain the additional point. Hardwired models that attack and win a Grid combat do not do damage as normal, instead they ‘steal’ up to d3 of the losers’ points. The defending model is not able to steal if he wins. Models cannot steal points the other player does not have.

Only one model per crew can access this system as it is considered closed to any additional hackers. They can be used as back-up or act normally on the Grid, but cannot affect any other models that are in the objective system, including those of their opponents.

SPECIAL OPS

So you have played the game and honed your skills, it is now time to turn up the heat. Rezolution is a living world, driven by its characters and its strong narrative backbone. To make this come alive on your tabletop you can take your crew on Special Ops - a series of assignments with multiple objectives and a central storyline or theme. We have provided one here to start you off, and you can be sure we will be providing plenty more in future expansions and on the Rezolution website at www.RezolutionDT.com. However, there is nothing stopping you and your friends from creating amazing Special Ops' campaigns yourself. The Rezolution universe is a deep and rich environment, and players should find an abundance of inspirational material within these pages. Other great plot ideas can come from your favorite movies, comics or video games, not to mention our own history - just reading though the fiction in this book should throw up hundreds of ideas begging to be played out on your game tables. And once you have decided on a plot, it is a great excuse to make some special themed terrain and maybe even customize some Rezolution miniatures to create the central characters in your stories. Use the framework of the assignments provided in this book to help you design your own assignments, but make sure the players agree on all the elements and any special rules before play. After you have just stopped a rogue scientist from releasing a deadly neurotoxin into Serenity City’s air recyclers or been hunted through the canals of London by a deadly mutant cult while trying to rescue an influential executive’s daughter, you will never want to just line your miniatures up on the side of a table again! Your adventures can go as far as your imagination can take you.

Jaime Jones

Simple minded fools, they couldn’t understand what I was trying to do. But you do, don’t you. You understand me. I don’t need their precious funding and their constant bureaucracy now. Oh yes, my dear, we’ll show them. We’ll show them all!”

The thing on the table just groaned mournfully in reply…

RESEARCH & DESTROY

Overview

A number of high profile scientists have recently disappeared and speculation and rumor are rife as to the cause. Somebody knows, but nobody is talking…

These missions can be played individually like the standard assignments, where both players decide on a points' value for the game and play through as a one-off game. However, they are best run as a campaign where players choose to unravel the mystery of the missing scientists or do their best to thwart those meddling interlopers and make sure no one gets out alive! After you have completed this Special Ops' assignment, switch places and see how well you fare playing on the other side! Set up terrain as you would normally. Some of the assignment plans feature prominent terrain features, but this should not be the only pieces on the table. A word of caution, the Research and Destroy campaign is challenging and you should have at least a few games under your belt and be familiar with the rules and your faction before attempting it. It is designed for two players only, but with some modifications you could easily change the assignments into multiplayer games.

ASSIGNMENT 1: PROTECTION

Briefing

Due to the recent spate of disappearances of prominent researchers, ARL industries has decided it would be prudent to hire some additional security for their award-winning research team.

Recommended Points Value: 400 per side

Play Area: 4'X4'

Objectives

Get the scientist off the table! One crew must guard the scientist with their lives while the other tries to steal him away! The defending player must get the scientist off the opposite side of the table from their starting sector.

Set-Up

Roll for order as per regular set-up rules.

The scientist is placed with the defender after ALL models have been set up.

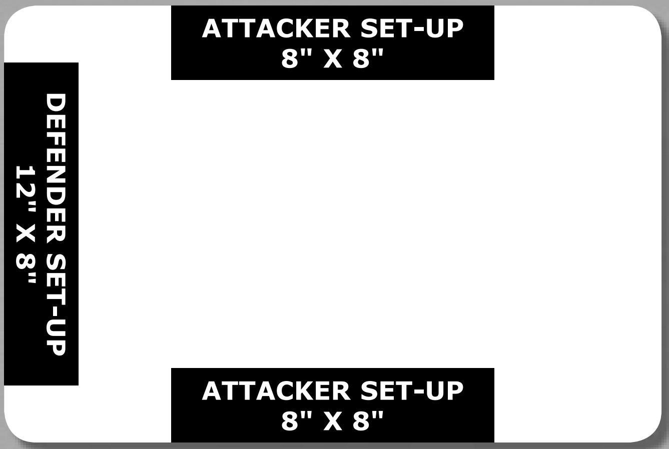
The attacker may place their crew's models in either starting sectors.

Game Length

Variable.

Special Rules

Game ends when the scientist is off the opposite side of the table.



The scientist must be in base-to-base contact with a model to be activated and while in base-to-base contact the models will operate as a team. If the scientist is out of base-to-base contact with his guard model at the end of the round, he will move randomly during the control phase until another model moves into base contact with him.

If the scientist is killed, the player that killed him automatically loses.

Scientist Attributes

MVE	SAG	BDY	NRV
5	2	2	2

Damage Gauge:

		-1	-2	D

ASSIGNMENT 2: INFILTRATION

Briefing

You managed to get a track on the muscle that tried to take the Doc. The trail leads into the wastelands and to what was thought to be a long-abandoned research facility. But guess what - somebody's home and they're packing…

Recommended Points Value: 800 to1,000 per side

Play Area: 4'X4'

Attacker's Objectives

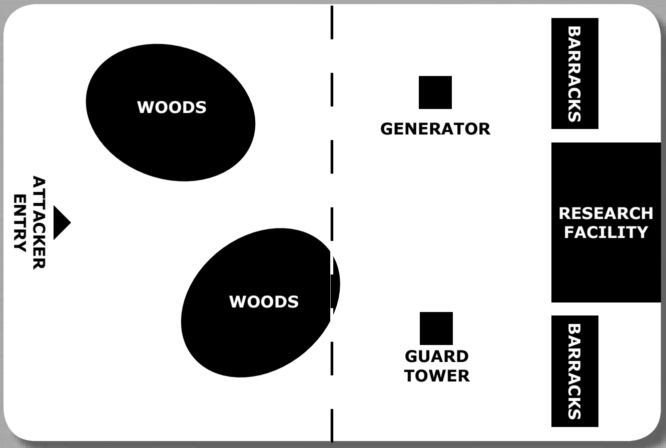
Destroy the generator and communications array to lower the perimeter defenses and enter the research facility.

Once the generator is destroyed, the attacker must exit the table by entering the research facility

The attacking crew's hacker must survive.

Set-Up

This assignment can easily be adjusted to be in any terrain type. For example: to stage it on Mars, replace the woodland areas with rock fields. Each player may also place up to 3 additional pieces of terrain, no higher than 2" and no longer than 4".



The defender sets up all his models in reserve except those models chosen to be on guard duty.

Game Length

The game is over when the attacking player moves a model through the research facility's entrance.

Special Rules

The defender may take up to five guards from his force (normal guard choices apply). At least one guard must be placed at the research facility entrance and one in the guard tower; others can be situated at the barracks and the generator. Patrol routes may be established within the facility perimeter. All other models on the defender's force are considered in reserve and will start from the barracks when the alarm is activated.

Guards in the tower gain an additional d6" to their spotting distance.

The research facility has mounted SMG auto-turrets on each corner of its roof. They will automatically fire at any enemy model that comes within 8" until the generator is destroyed. Their system is considered aggressive with a target number of 10 and defensive feedback of 3d6 damage. Once the generator is down they are considered neutral systems with a target number of 10.

The research facility door must be hacked - it is a neutral system with a target number of 10. If the door is opened before the generator is destroyed, the alarm automatically sounds.

A model must spend the whole of its action phase in base contact with the generator to plant the charges. The attacker may detonate the charges on any one of his model's turns after they are placed. The generator will explode with a 5" radius blast causing 6d6 damage to anyone within its area of effect. The explosion will activate all the defender's models if the alarm has not already been raised.

Once an attacking model has been spotted, the alarm is considered to be raised and the defender may activate all his models as normal. The defender's reserve models enter the game from the barracks' building.

At the end of the fifth round the sirens sound automatically. If the generator is not down by then, the attackers automatically lose the game.

If the attacker fails to destroy the generator before the alarm is raised, the defenders will receive an additional 20% worth of troops at no cost on the Demolition assignment.

ASSIGNMENT 3: DEMOLITION

Briefing

You're in! Now all you've got to do is pull the data and get out with the missing scientist. What you didn't know is there has been a slight accident in the labs and things are not as they should be.

Recommended Points Value: 800 per side

Play Area: 4'X4'

Attackers Objectives

Primary Objective: Deactivate the self-destruct. Download all the facility's research and escape with your crew's hacker alive.

Secondary Objective: Rescue as many scientists as possible.

Defenders Objectives

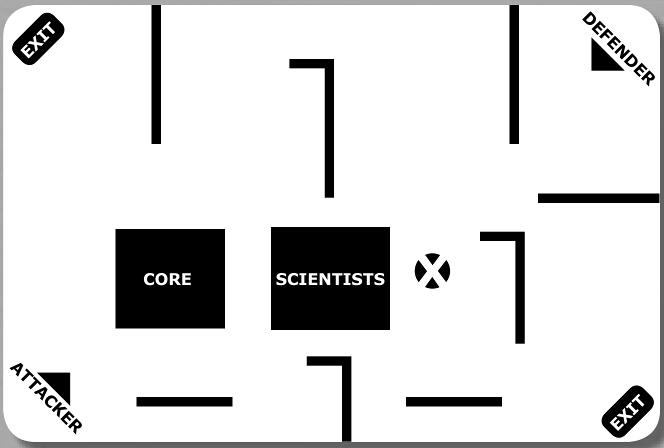
Primary Objective: Remove the scientists from the base.

Secondary Objective: Destroy the intruders!

Set-Up

Players should start their models in an 8"X8" square in their set-up zone.

When leaving the table after the self-destruct has re-initiated, models have to make it within 8" of one the table's exit corner points.



Game Length

Variable.

Special Rules

The self-destruct system is located in the central core - it is an aggressive system (damage 2d6) with a target number of 8. Once the hacker has entered the system it is considered deactivated.

If the attacker has not deactivated the self-destruct by the beginning of the fourth round, it detonates and the defender has automatically won.

The research files are deeply encrypted and stored on a separate system - this is an aggressive system (damage 3d6) with a target number of 10. It takes one round to download the files once the system is beaten. Once the download is complete, the self-destruct reactivates with a 3 round countdown - there is no way of stopping this countdown. Models must evacuate the base by the designated exit points. They can be considered to have left the table when they come within 8" of the exit corner. At the end of the third round, all models left on the map are considered destroyed.

There are four scientists in the holding pen. They will not move unless taken out and then they follow the same rules laid down for the scientist in Assignment One: Protection.

To make life 'more interesting' some of the doctor's experiments have decided to come and see what all the commotion is about and escape from the subterranean labs! Place d3+3 Toxic Zombies at the 'X' to represent them entering the game. An additional d3 Toxic Zombies will enter play every turn from there. The Zombies will move and attack during the control phase as described in their profile.

If the attacker escapes with the files, it is worth 20 victory points.

Every scientist that escapes is worth 15 victory points to the player that 'liberates' them. Scientists have the same profile and obey the same rules as in the first assignment. A model may guide up to two scientists, although he may not make a run move if he is taking more than one. If a player accidentally kills a scientist they receive -15 victory points. In this assignment the Toxic Zombies ignore the scientists completely and will not attack them as the scientists have been specially chipped with a custom resonator that masks their life signs.

As mentioned earlier, this campaign is meant to challenge players and nowhere is this more evident than in this assignment. If you wish, you can make life easier on your crews by only having Toxic Zombies on the first round and extending the round countdowns. However, as written this assignment is great fun and is a really tense involving game for both players.

ASSIGNMENT 4: EXTRACTION

Briefing

This assignment features a role reversal from the previous two. The attacker is now the defender, beset on all sides by not only the remainder of the troops stationed at the facility, but the now unleashed monstrosities!

Recommended Points Value: 400 per side
Play Area: 4′ X 4′

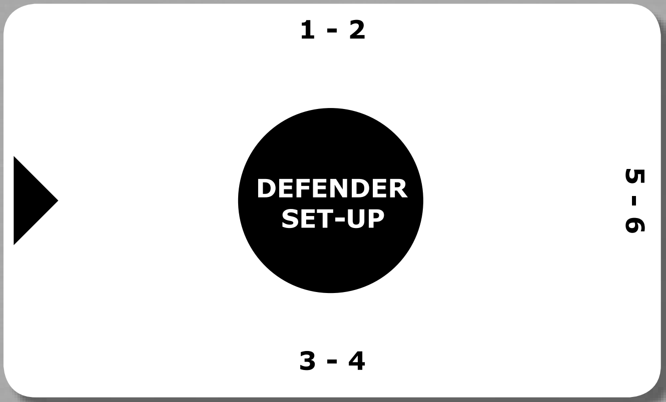
Objectives

Stand your ground until evac!

Set-Up

Players may set up as they wish. The board should be densely packed with terrain apart from a 12″ diameter clearing in the center to represent the landing-pad. The landing-pad should be ringed with terrain making it an easier place to defend.

If players wish to, they may make this assignment more challenging by keeping a list of who survived from their crew in the previous assignment. All damage and other penalties are considered cleared, so the models start afresh for their final mission. It is assumed they have medical and other supplies waiting for them when they exit the complex. Each player may also add up to 200 points to their crew to represent models that were outside the facility during the last assignment.



Game Length

Random. At the end of every round after the fourth, roll a d6 to see if your transport has arrived. On the fourth round a roll of 5 or 6 is required; on the following round 4,5 or 6; then 3,4,5 or 6 and so on until the eighth round, when the transport automatically turns up if it has not before.

Special Rules

During every control phase including the first, 1d6 Toxic Zombies enter the board. First determine the number of Zombies that come into play and then roll a d6 per Zombie and refer to the set-up diagram to determine which side they enter from. In the Zombies first turn, they will automatically move 8″ towards the center of the table and will perform no other action; ignore the swarm ability for the first turn a Toxic Zombie is in play.

Carneli watched the plumes of smoke drift into the crystal clear sky. The warmth of the blaze was fading now and the chill morning air was beginning to permeate his long coat. He heard Ruben approaching long before his call, his boots crunching through the crisp frosted snow.

"Marshal. Marshal Carneli, the compound's been thoroughly cleansed. A professional job, but we've found something that I think you should take a look at." His breath hung in the air like a fog as he handed Carneli the piece of melted and twisted plastic.

"You should get that arm seen to before it gets infected," he said as he began to wipe the soot and dirt from the debris that had got Ruben so flustered. Underneath the grime there lay a corner of a logo, scratched and faded, but unmistakable.

"Maybe the good Doctor wasn't as independent as he thought."

Optional Assignment Rules

If players wish, they may add some of the special rules listed below to their assignments to add a further layer of danger and atmosphere to their games. Both players must agree beforehand on the use of any of these optional rules.

1. Unacceptable Losses

If a player's crew is reduced to 50% or less of its starting number of models, they immediately withdraw giving their opponent a clear victory.

2. Last Man Standing

If a player's crew has only one model left, it automatically passes any morale based NRV tests and gains the Shrug-it-Off ability.

3. Toxic Terrors

A number of Toxic Zombies have escaped from a nearby research facility and are in the area posing a threat to everyone. Roll d3+3 (or d3+6 for larger games) for the number of Zombies on the table. Players then take turns in placing them on the table, randomly determining who places first. The models must be placed within 6″ of those already placed.

4. Sentinel Turrets

Roll 1d6 to determine the type of turret. Then roll 1d3 to determine number of available turrets. Players should take turns placing turrets on the table having randomly determined who places first. Turrets start deactivated, but can be controlled remotely by players or via the Grid as detailed in the Hacking section of this rulebook.

Roll a d6 to determine type.	
1-2	Pulse Turrets
3-4	SMG Turrets
5	Beam Turrets
6	Rocket Turrets

Sentinel Turret Attributes (Armor 1)

RCA	BDY	DAMAGE GAUGE		
0	3			

To hit a turret in ranged combat, the attacker must roll equal or over to a target number of 10.

Turrets are automatically hit in close combat.

Turrets cannot be placed within 12” of another turret and are placed before player models are set up.

5. Zero-G

Playing in a zero or low gravity presents some interesting challenges for crews - these rules reflect some of the effects that can occur in this type of environment:

- All weapons operate the same at long range as they do at short range.
- Flame throwers: Place a 2” template in front of the model and roll 3d6; this is the amount in inches the template will travel. Anything touched by the template will take damage as normal. The template is removed as the propellant is considered to have burned out once it has traveled the maximum allowable distance.
- No Run moves.
- Charge distance is MVE + d3”
- Models with the Swift ability charge MVE + 3”
- Deviation is Deviation Dice + 1d6”
- Jumps are 3” + 1d6” - models MUST be moved to the maximum distance.

6. Electrical Storm

(exterior terrain games only)

The weather systems on Earth and Mars are not only unpredictable, but also potentially deadly; fierce electrical storms can suddenly hit without warning, cutting a swathe of destruction in their path. After the first round and during the second control phase, roll a d3 and add 1 for the number of 2” electrical templates that are generated and place them in the center of the table. Then roll the Deviation Dice for each template and move them that many inches in the direction indicated. Any model touched by the template receives 3d6 damage; bots suffer an additional -1 penetration modifier. During each following control phase, roll a d6 for each template: on a 1-3 the template stays in play and continues to move randomly as described; on a 4-6 the storm fades out and the template is removed from play.

7. Low Light Environments

Sometimes your crew may be forced to fight in the dark, in the midst of a sandstorm or other such phenomena where visibility is next to nothing. In these situations each model has to spot a target as detailed in the Spotting rules. Creatures such as guard dogs that normally help are no use in these conditions. They may tell you the general direction of the enemy, but they do not help you to see them any better! For a very challenging game you can even reduce the spotting distance down to a d6!

8. Hull Breach

Spaceships are not an ideal place for a firefight, neither are the submersible cities in Earth’s polluted waters and most people would think twice about even lighting a match on some parts of a cluster city! But these events do occur, so designate a side of your gaming table (or more if you are feeling adventurous!) to be an exterior wall; the walls have a value of Armor 4 BDY 5 for damage purposes. For any ranged attack that misses its target, and the exterior wall is within the model’s firing arc, roll a d6. On a 5 or 6 the shot hits the wall. Weapons that are designated as automatic always hit the exterior wall if they miss the target providing they are within the correct firing arc, as do blast templates if they are touching or would normally travel off the table.

Most stations are equipped with emergency doors that will seal off a compromised area during the next control phase. Models that are stuck in the area for one round are considered dead and removed from play in the next control phase. The doors systems are considered to have a target number of 10 to override. If they remain open longer than one round, the next section’s emergency doors will activate and seal off that section and so on. A hacker can close the doors during his control or action phase automatically so long as he has remote access or is hardwired. This does not count as his action.

For the daring, if it fits in with your assignment, you could also bring in the Zero-G rules once a hull breach has occurred.

THE BUTCHER OF BAKER STREET

Audio Diary of Adjudicator Emily Harrington.

<<Start Recording>>

Tuesday March 21st, 2173.

It was 5:45 am. Adjudicator Cubby Wilson was in one of those silent and thinking moods that took him when things weren’t right. The room was so thick with smoke from his pipe that I could have cut the air with a blade.

When the call came in over the Unipol network, I somehow knew in the pit of my stomach that another body had been found in the canals around Baker Street. By the look on Cubby’s face I think he knew it too.

This case has been going on for a couple of years now with a new body every three to four months. Global 9 News has dubbed it the "Butcher of Baker Street," much to Cubby’s disgust and, even worse, they are calling this "Cubby Wilson’s Greatest Failure." After all the good things he has done, all the crimes he has solved, one potential failure and they forget all of that, just like vultures they are these so-called media giants. I am worried that this case could be the one to beat him, the one case that breaks him. I can already see the lines of stress and worry travel across his face.

Before I could move, Cubby had leapt from his seat and signaled to the sergeant in charge of the support unit that was lounging around in the back room. The frantic rush of troopers scrambling for their equipment is always something that amuses Cubby, but not today. If anything, his mood seemed to darken.

The trip over the early morning streets and canals of London did not take long. Not many flyers around at that time of day and any there were soon moved when they saw the lights flashing through the fog.

We arrived in the vicinity of Boston Place within minutes, the Barracuda settling down in front of that derelict monolith, Marylebone Station. A decaying mass of concrete and brick, miles of crumbling masonry and rusting metal that reaches out to the sky, casting forlorn shadows in the dawn sun across the murky canals that surround it. Those sepulchral places always seem to crawl under my skin, leaving me with a feeling of melancholy. These old buildings should have been torn down years ago, but no one seems to care and now they are just left as havens for jugglers, prostitutes, and thieves.

Without waiting for support, Cubby was off and running down the alley to where the corpse had been found. I arrived scant seconds after him, slightly out of breath from the sprint to keep up. He was already kneeling down at the waterfront looking at the monstrous sight that bobbed in the tide.

The corpse, a woman like all the others, had been savagely mutilated. As I looked down, the taste of bile rose in my throat and I fought against the nausea. Like all the others this was no normal assault; no angry pimp with a knife could have done this. The woman had been savagely eviscerated. It was hard to tell how long she had been dead and how many of the wounds had been caused by the killer or by the vermin that infest these canals.

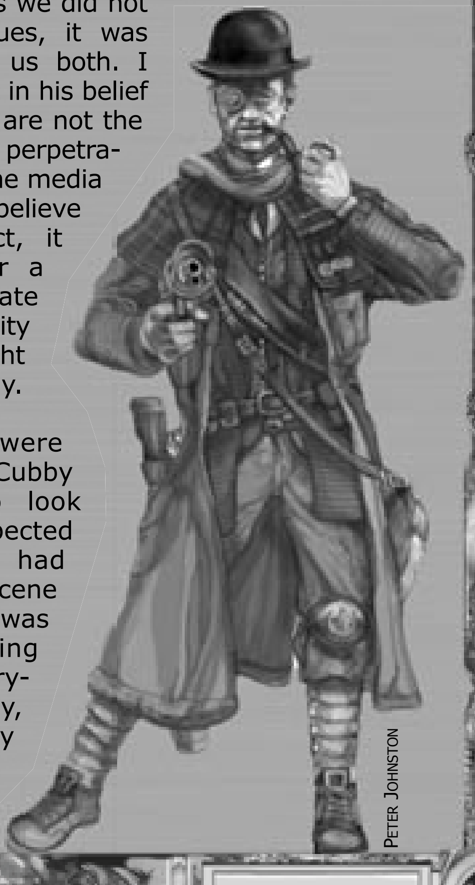
<<Pause Recording>>

<<Resume Recording>>

Cubby called me over to take a closer look – Miss Harrington he called me, he always calls me Miss Harrington.

Kneeling down next to him, I could feel the cold water seeping through my clothes, freezing me to the bone. I looked at the woman’s torn clothing through to the hacked flesh underneath.
In all these attacks we did not have any real clues, it was so frustrating for us both. I agreed with Cubby in his belief that these attacks are not the work of a mutant perpetrator, even though the media would have us believe otherwise. In fact, it is unheard of for a mutant to operate this deep into the city and not be caught almost immediately.

Convinced we were being watched, Cubby told me not to look around. He suspected the perpetrator had returned to the scene of the crime and was watching, gloating perhaps. I was trying to act normally, but it was not easy as I was scanning the area for



Peter Johnston

a glimpse of this elusive shadow. Could this be the break we had hoped for, finally a chance to end this case.

Returning to the transport as Cubby had instructed, I used the com to contact Marshal Jackson who told me that a scan of the area had revealed nothing. I called Cubby over to give him the bad news. As he came round the corner, he signaled to me to join him at the side of the building. Drawing our weapons, we pushed through a rotting door that splintered and crumbled as we entered.

The smell that hit us was appalling. The stench of death and decay hit me like a jackhammer and as the acrid odor started to burn its way into my lungs, I desperately clenched my teeth to stop from gagging.

We moved quietly along the wall, being careful not to trip on the debris that littered the floor. At the far end of the room was a stairway. We scanned the area, making sure no one was hiding in the dark shadows as we moved towards the stairs. Painfully slowly, we climbed, listening all the time for movement or any sign that our quarry was aware of us. We heard nothing.

We reached eye level with the upper floor and looked into the room beyond.

Nothing.

The room was empty.

The early morning light was already dispelling the shadows and a light breeze whispered across the room.

Moving across to the window Cubby peered out at the troopers below. They were busy hauling the body out of the canal with the support Barracuda hovering above.

Then a noise echoed around the room, a loud crack from straight behind us. All pretense of stealth now gone, we darted for the door, Cubby reaching it a split second before me. Crashing through, Cubby lost his footing and stumbled to his knees. I leapt past him, eyes and pistol already scanning the room for a target. A glimpse of movement in the shadows to the right and I spun round as the shape moved through a doorway, surprisingly quickly for its huge form.

Cubby was back on his feet and in pursuit again. Crashing into the next room, we found it had eluded us once more, but the door into the next room was swinging on its hinges.

The floorboards groaned as we rushed through the building, chasing the shape that was always just one step ahead of us. At one point the wood gave way beneath my feet and, as I struggled, I could see down to another debris-strewn floor far below me. A strong hand grasped mine as I fought to save myself and Cubby pulled me back on to firmer ground.

We resumed our pursuit and entered the last room on that level. We had to have him cornered now - but no. In the far wall was an opening, the wooden hatch long since rotted away. Across the murky canal waters, on the opposite roof, we could see a dark shape moving away from us.

Holstering his gun, I could see Cubby was going to make the jump and I had to follow. He took a few steps back and rushed towards the opening.

With arms swinging wildly to gain momentum, he landed inches from the edge, but safely on the other side. I stepped back and with all the speed I could muster rushed towards the gap. As I approached the opening I felt the floor flex and crack under my feet. It was too late, I couldn't stop, I had to continue.

The air rushed past me as I leapt into space. I could see the roof of the building hurtling towards me, and I knew I was not going to make it. I reached out, my fingers just grasping the edge, but as I slammed into the wall, the air was knocked out of me. My muscles were screaming as I strained to pull myself up. I knew I was on my own as Cubby should by now be halfway across the rooftop in pursuit.

My arms were on fire as I ached to hold on. I did not know how much longer I could last and then a gloved hand reached down and grabbed me. Cubby pulled me up onto the roof with an ease and strength that belied his stature. For the second time tonight he had chosen to help me at the risk of losing our prey. I scrambled to my feet, but we both knew it was too late. The roof was empty.

<<End Recording>>

WHERE THERE'S A WEAPON, THERE'S A WAY

There are a wide variety of weapons available to the discerning customer of the 22nd century. The laser weaponry of science fiction is still in its infancy, but now, at least, it is portable for man, although most human designs still have to be attached to a power pack that, unfortunately, has a very short life span. These weapons are cost prohibitive for the average buyer and so, even as man colonizes the stars and AIs walk and work among us, the good old-fashioned piece of metal propelled at incredible speeds is still the favored method of dispatching one's enemies - although many are now made from plastic polymers and ceramics so as to avoid the multitude of detection devices that exist within the domes and corporate arcologies. Swords and other close combat weapons have also come back into favor over the last sixty years - partly due to the need to fight in the close confines of a starship because of pirates or over-eager scrappies, but also because they do not emit any heat signatures when in use. The modern-day sword is a far cry from its ancient origins; their mono-molecular blades can cut through bone and steel as if it were butter and, of course, the only noise a sword makes is the gurgle from its victim's last gasp.

Present Arms

All weapon profiles are presented in a similar way on the models' data cards. Once you understand the basics, the game can be played lightning-fast without having to continually check the rulebook for stats as all you need is right there on the card. Both close combat and ranged weapons are similar in profiles and any special rules will be detailed in their description.

"Shut up already!"

"Hey, you'd better watch your mouth."

"Or what - you're going to sue me. No, don't tell me, you'll report me to the firearms union."

"Oh, aren't you the comic genius! You'd be shaking in those platform soles if you only knew."

"So I'm below average. My parents couldn't afford the growth treatments, big deal."

"Below average, right! Look, do you want me to shoot some people or not?"

"If only I could've afforded a better model – ok, gun, lets go."

Weapon's Profile Example:

X-Tec Beamer			
Range:	8/16" -1LR	**Damage:**	5d6 P2
Special:	Critical Fire – on the roll of a 6 during damage the model has caught fire.		

X-Tec Beamer (energy) is the name and type of weapon.

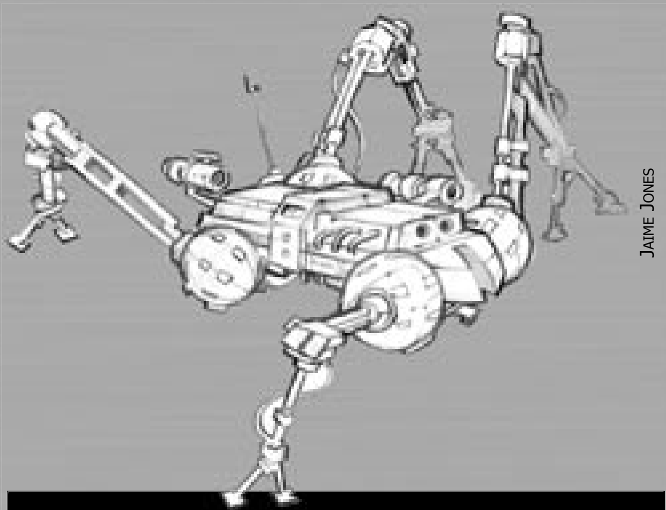
Range is how far the weapon can fire in inches. The first number (8) represents its short range (SR); the second number (16) is the maximum range. Between 8" and 16" is called the weapon's long range (LR). Many weapons have a modifier that changes a model's RCA score when used at long range: the -1LR represents this. –1LR means you deduct one from your total RCA score; -2LR means you deduct two and so on. Occasionally you will find modifiers such as +1SR: this means the modifier is added to the RCA score and is only applicable at short range.

Damage: For damage, 5d6 is the amount of dice you can roll before subtracting armor and P represents a weapon's penetration that will negate armor on a point per point basis. In this case, if you had hit a model with Armor 2, the penetration value of 2 cancels out the armor so you would roll 5d6 for damage, needing equal or above the target model's BDY. Damage for some weapons or powers may be written like this P1(2); the number in brackets refers to the penetration the weapon has on bots, cyborgs or other designated creatures.

Most models in Rezolution carry multiple weapons, but they can only fire or use one per turn unless they have dual weapons; then they may choose to use both at a -1 modifier to their RCA score.

Some models have a choice of weapons, but a player can only assign one of these weapons to a model. It must be clearly marked in the appropriate place on the data card before play starts.

The arsenals of 2175 include far more than just personal side-arms: a wide assortment of bots, sentinel turrets, remote boards and custom programs are all available to the discerning user to make life that little bit easier - for the right price of course! Only models that state specifically on their data card that they can take these items can purchase them for a game; the points' value of these items are added to the crew's total as normal.



Jaime Jones

BOMB-BOTS

Bomb-bots are simple robots programmed with a very simple task - seek out the enemy. Once these nimble little bots come in range, their controller will detonate the powerful explosive that makes up half their body weight.

Bomb-Bot Profile

MVE	SAG	BDY	DAMAGE GAUGE
8	4	2	

Points Cost: 6

Damage: 4d6 3” Blast template.

Special: Bomb-bots move on the same turn as their controller. They operate autonomously and do not use up the model’s action to operate.

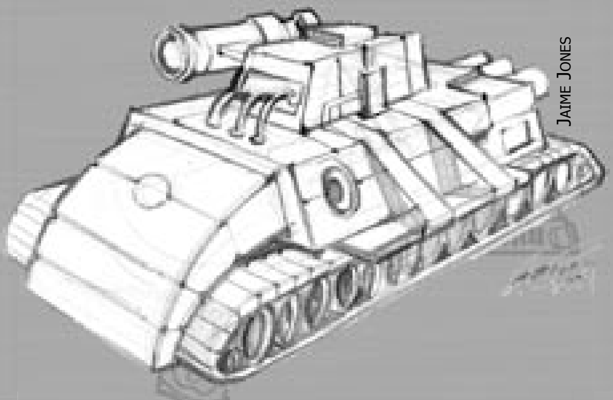
They cannot make a Run move.

The controlling player can detonate them at the end of their movement.

Once detonated, the model is removed from play.

If they are destroyed by an attack, on the roll of a 4, 5, or 6 they will explode.

System: Neutral Target Number 10



Jaime Jones

SENTINEL TURRETS

To hit a Sentinel Turret in range combat, a player must roll equal or over a target number of 10. They can be deactivated if a model is within a 1/2” of the turret by using its action to do so.

Sentinel Turret Profile

Armor: 1

RCA	BDY	DAMAGE GAUGE		
0	3			

Sentinel Turrets may be armed with one of the following weapons.

Beam Turret

Points Cost: 15

Range: 8" -1LR **Damage:** 5d6 P1

Special: Critical Fire – on the roll of a 6 during damage the model has caught fire.

SMG Turret

Points Cost: 12

Range: 8" **Damage:** 6d6

Special: Automatic

Pulse Turret

Points Cost: 10

Range: 8" **Damage:** 4d6 P1(2)

Special: Critical Stun – on the roll of a 6 during damage, the model is stunned and must roll a 4, 5 or 6 during the control phase to regain consciousness and be able to activate as normal during the round.

Launcher Turret

Points Cost: 16

Range: 14" **Damage:** 4d6

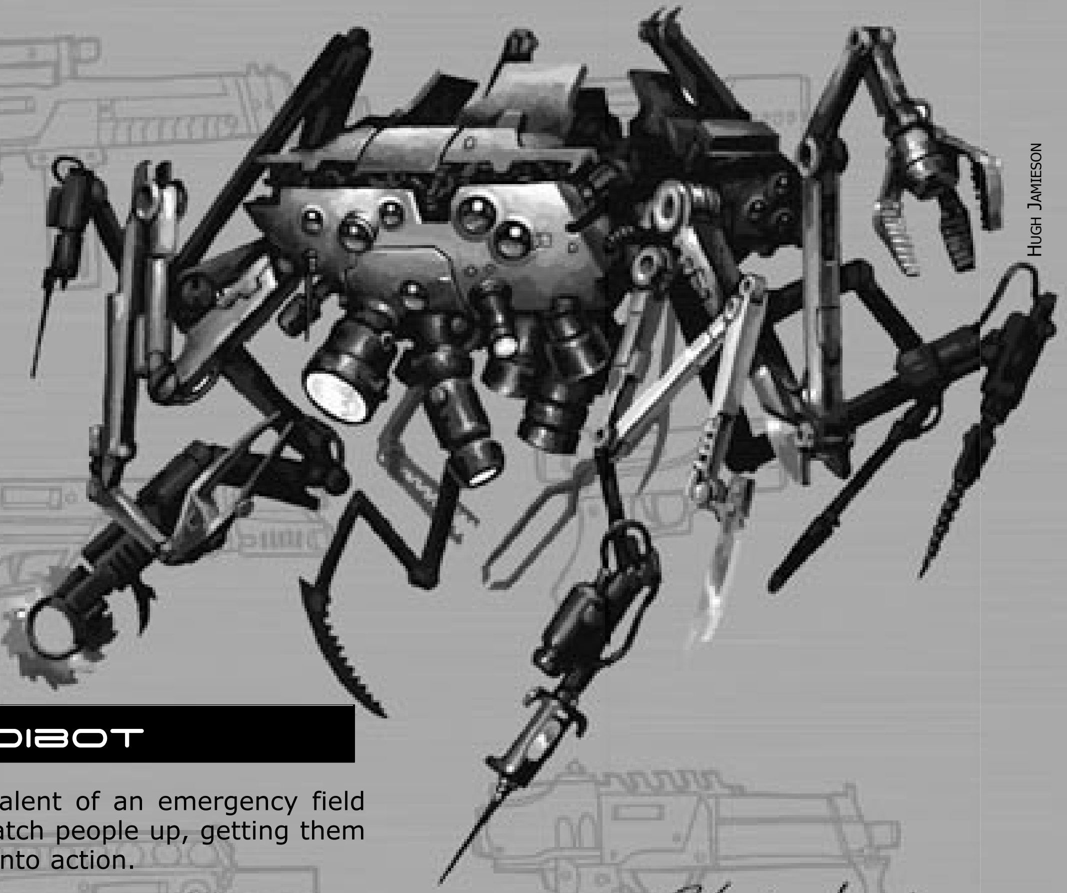
Special: 5” Blast template
Launcher Turret may ONLY fire once per round.

Special Rules: Sentinel Turrets may be placed by the model during the action phase of its turn. It may perform no other actions while setting up a turret.

A Sentinel Turret will fire up to once per turn at any enemy model or team that passes in front of its 90º fire arc and is within its weapon’s range.

System: Aggressive Target Number 10

Damage: 1d6



MEDIBOT

A Medibot is the equivalent of an emergency field doctor and is able to patch people up, getting them on their feet and back into action.

Medibot Profile

Armor: 1

MVE	SAG	BDY	DAMAGE GAUGE	
6	4	3		

Points Cost: 4

Special: A Medibot activates on the same turn as its controller. They operate autonomously and do not use up the model's action to operate.

They may attempt to 'heal' an injured model during their action phase.

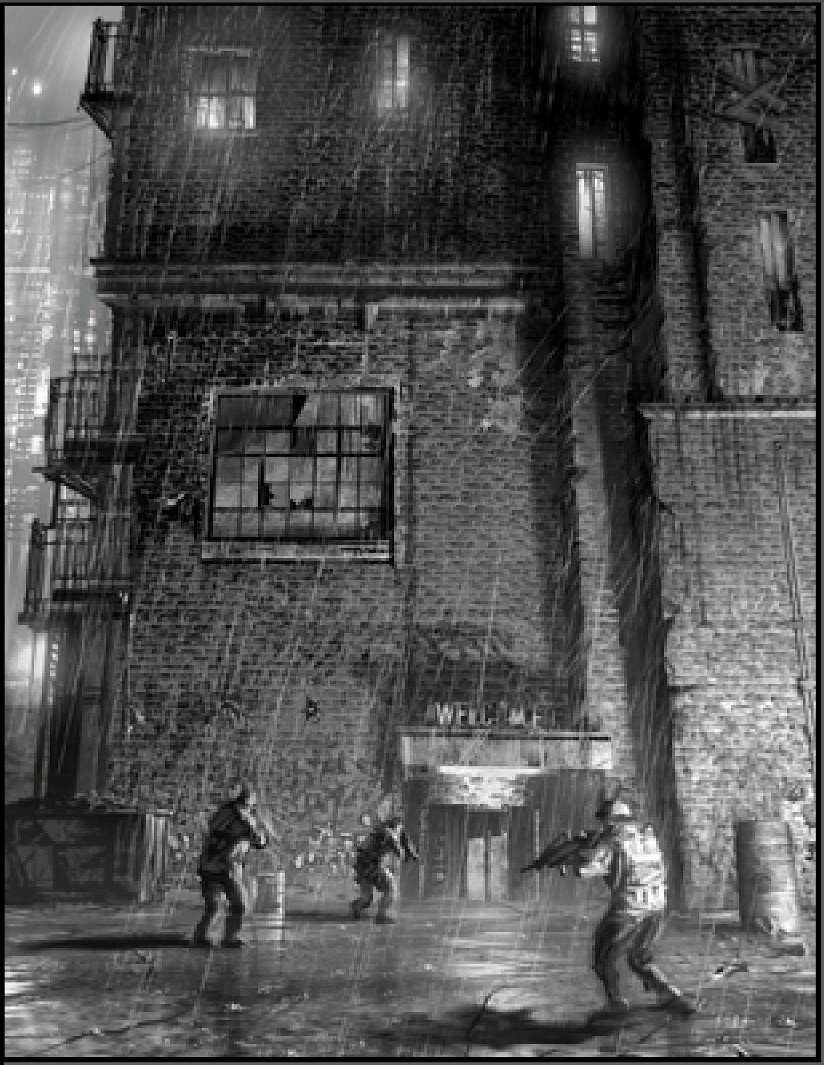
To heal, roll a d3, and then remove that number of blocks of damage from the model's Damage Gauge.

The Medibot is a hovering model and ignores terrain penalties. It can pass over blocking terrain up to 6" in height without any penalty.

A Medibot must be within a 1/2" of a model to attempt to heal it.

System: Aggressive Target Number 10

Damage: 2d6



Jaime Jones

His muscles screaming, he felt the door slide shut behind him and the swish of the displaced air sent a shiver down his spine. Every noise was heightened, even the swirl of the dust sounded like the CSO VTOLs. The stimulant surging through his bloodstream created a sensory explosion many were unable to control, but not Zero. His body had grown accustomed to the surges of input even while his physical state seemed to deteriorate around him. Spending most of his time on the Grid, his body had become emaciated and his skin white, lacking any color to brighten his complexion.

He lent back against the door, listening for any signs of pursuit. He heard nothing. Breathing heavily, he slid to the floor; he was not used to physical exertion and his rasping breath cut through the silence.

After a few minutes, still listening for signs of pursuit, his breathing was under control and he pulled himself slowly to his feet. He looked around. Where was he? He had intercepted orders from the Unipol network ordering Unit 6 to apprehend and detain him, and he knew he had to get out. He had only just made it. As he had stepped out onto the crowded streets, searchlights from the Barracudas were already panning across his building as they covered the troopers from above. Seconds later and Zero knew he would have been in custody.

The only objects he had managed to pick up as he hurriedly left his rundown apartment were his leads and board. No true Grid jockey could be without them as this was their passport online. They had no need for a physical life as they lived to ride the bits and bytes of the data streams; roaming the secure networks of organizations and corporations, selling their services to the highest bidder, using their fees to purchase either the stimulants that heightened the experience, or to buy better and faster implants.

Moving away from the door, Zero searched the abandoned room around him. Against one wall was an old Gamma 6 terminal. He hadn't seen one of these for years; they had been superseded many times. Once state of the art, now a relic in a derelict apartment, would it still work? He had to try.

Slotting the jack into the interface on his neck and the other end into the terminal, a rush of electronic life filled his head. As the connection was made, he felt the exquisite pleasure as a rush of sensory delight flowed through his body. He could feel the flow of the Grid flooding through him in a kaleidoscope of color and sound, obscuring the peeling paint and broken plaster around him. A life without the Grid would be no life at all. He was now oblivious to the noises outside the door. In the real world, weapons were being armed and followed by the rush of troopers as they swept into the room.

Zero's lead was a passport to the pleasures of the Grid, but an unexpected disconnection could be a one-way ticket to a life of mental stupor, death or maybe something else.....

As Lieutenant Conroy strode into the room, he quickly surveyed his surroundings for any other threat and then, reaching out, he jerked on the lead.

A final scream escaped as a hiss of air through clenched teeth, but Zero was already long gone…

QUICK
REFERENCE
GUIDE

QUICK REFERENCE

THE GAME ROUND

1. Control Phase
2. Players alternate turns

Control Phase Order

1. Control roll.
2. Special effect rolls (poison, fire, etc).
3. Fatal damage rolls.
4. Attempt to rally models.
5. Compulsory movement. *Models first, then all other compulsory movement, such as smoke, etc.*
6. Activate hardwired models

Player Turn Order

1. Model or team activates
2. Movement
3. Action

MORALE TESTS

- if a model or a team is hit by suppressing fire.
- when a model takes damage in close combat.
- when a team loses 25% or more of its current members in a round.
- when a team has lost 50% or more of its starting members.
- when a model is being attacked by, or attempting to attack in close combat a model that is considered horrific. Models need only test once per unique horrific model.
- when a model with the Leadership skill dies within 6” of friendly model

FATAL DAMAGE CHART

1-2	**Dead** Model is removed from play.
3-4	**Stunned** The model is now stunned and prone. Roll again in the following control phase.
5-6	**Can’t Keep a Good Man Down** Apply any modifiers listed on your Damage Gauge to MVE, RCA, CCA and NRV.

COVER MODIFIERS

Soft	-1 to attacker’s RCA
Medium	-1 to attacker’s RCA +1 to defender’s armor
Hard	-1 to attacker’s RCA +2 to defender’s armor

GENERAL MODIFIERS

Model has moved over 10” on its turn	-1 to attacking model’s RCA
Holding models firing	-1 to their RCA
Spotting hidden models	2d6” is the distance in inches a model can spot. Enemy models are automatically spotted if a model is moved within 4”
Jumping	D3” horizontally. Up to 1” vertically
Landing prone after a jump	Target Number 10. Roll 2d6 and add SAG. If failed, model automatically takes 1 point of damage with no armor modifiers allowed.
Falling	1d6 damage per inch.
Fleeing	2d6” towards nearest exit or table edge
Recovering from being stunned	Target Number 10: 2d6 + BDY
Fire	D6 roll. 1-3 still on fire, automatically take 1 damage with no modifiers allowed. 4-6 fire is out
Shooting at random movement target	Target Number 8
NRV test	Target Number 10
Attacking an elevated model	-1 RCA
Attacking an elevated model in CCA	-1 to attacker’s CCA for first round
Firing into close combat	-3 RCA
Firing at prone model from greater than 6” away	Target Number 10
Firing at prone model from less than 6” away	Target Number 5
Model attacking over cover	-1 to attacker’s CCA for first round

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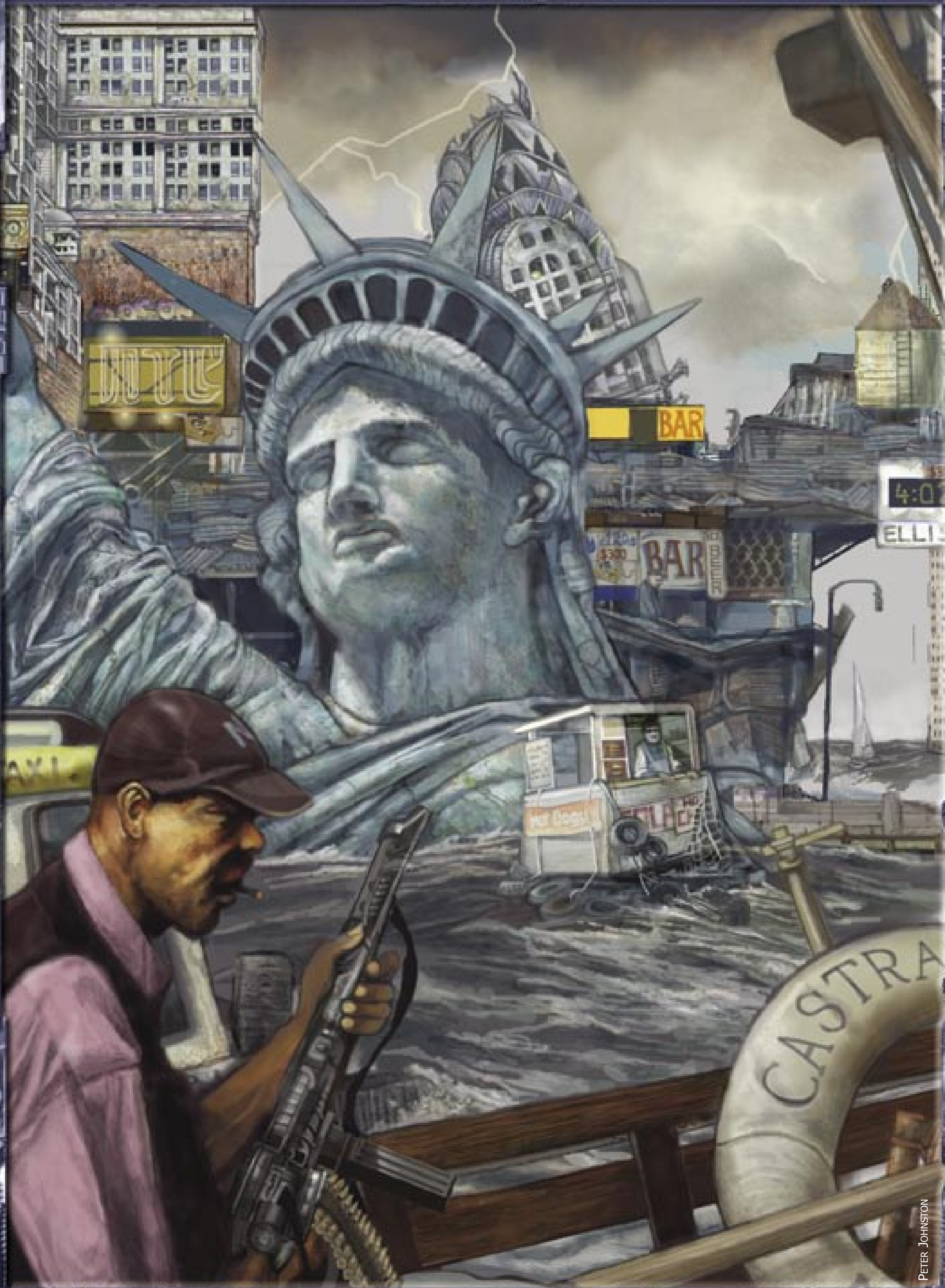
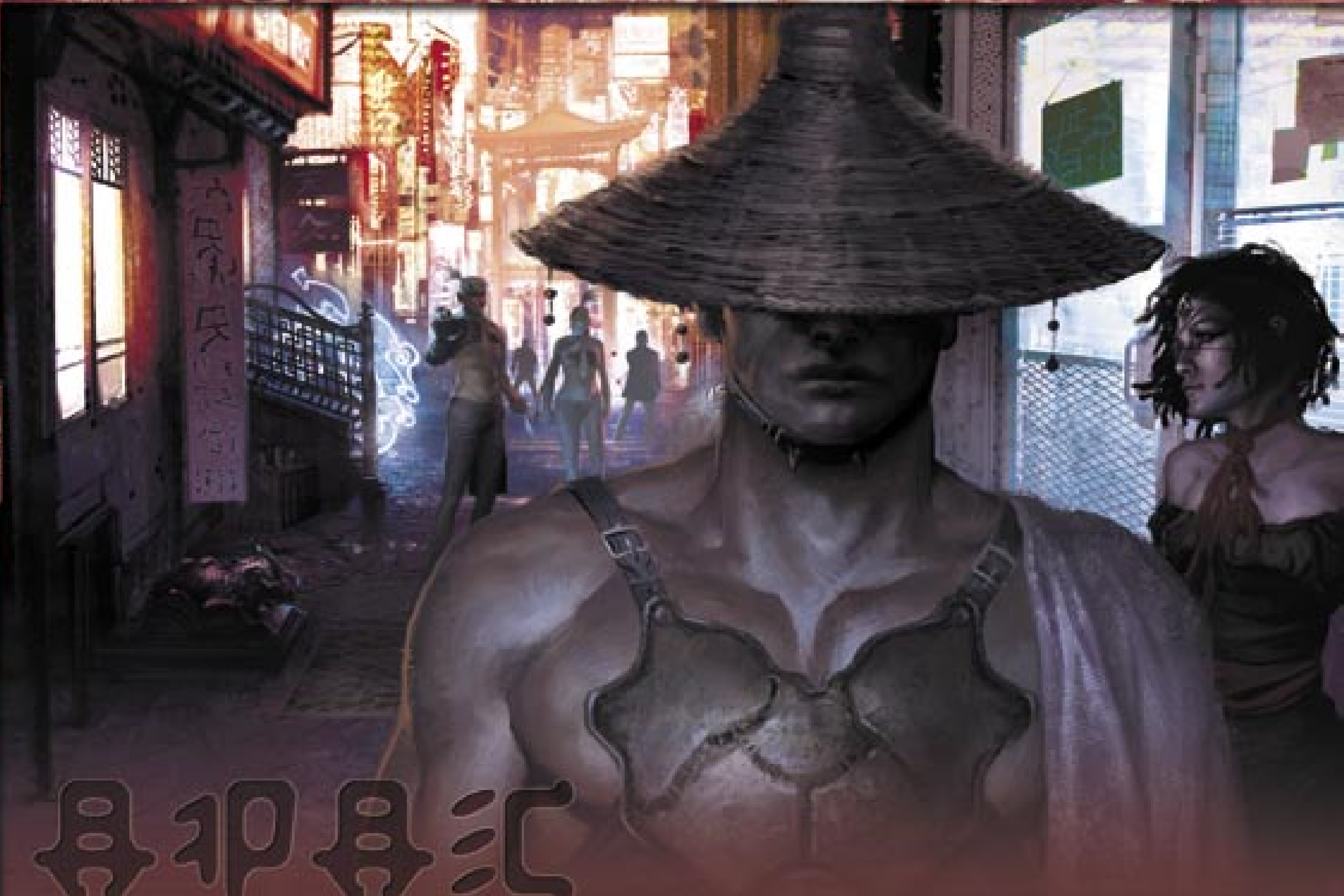

BAR
4:02
ELLI
BAR
TAXI
CASTRA

PETER JOHNSTON



APAC

APAC Crew

Arashi

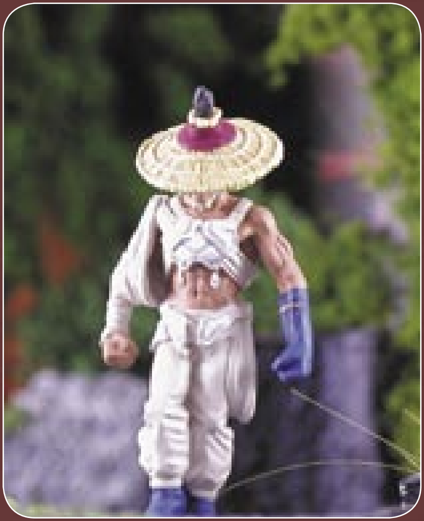
Enforcer

Numb Sister

Enforcer Lieutenant

Yuurei

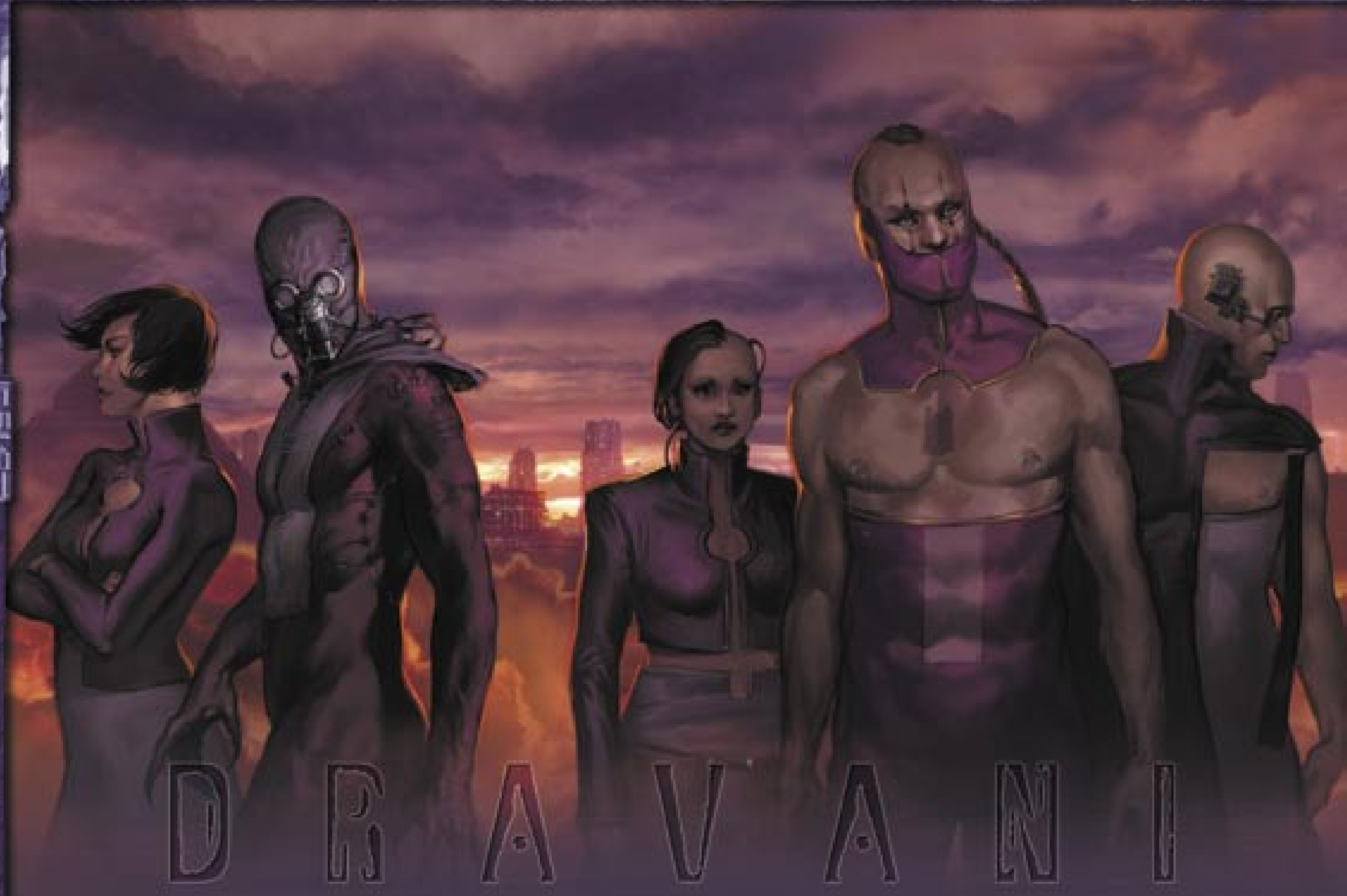
Enforcers



Enforcer Heavy

Bishoujo Senshi

E.M.C.Oo



DRAVANI

Dravani Crew

E.M.C.Oo

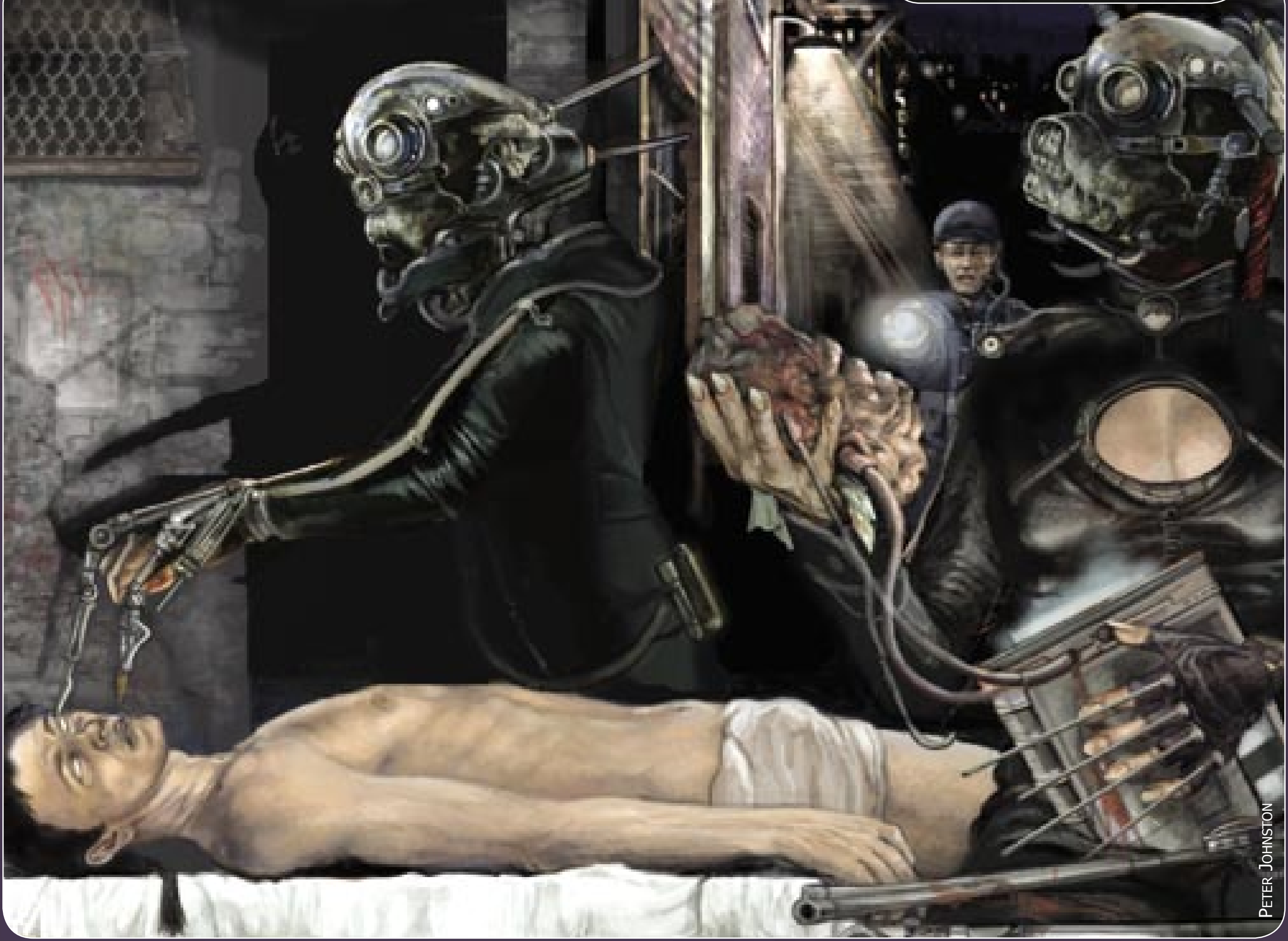
Souless

Shamblers

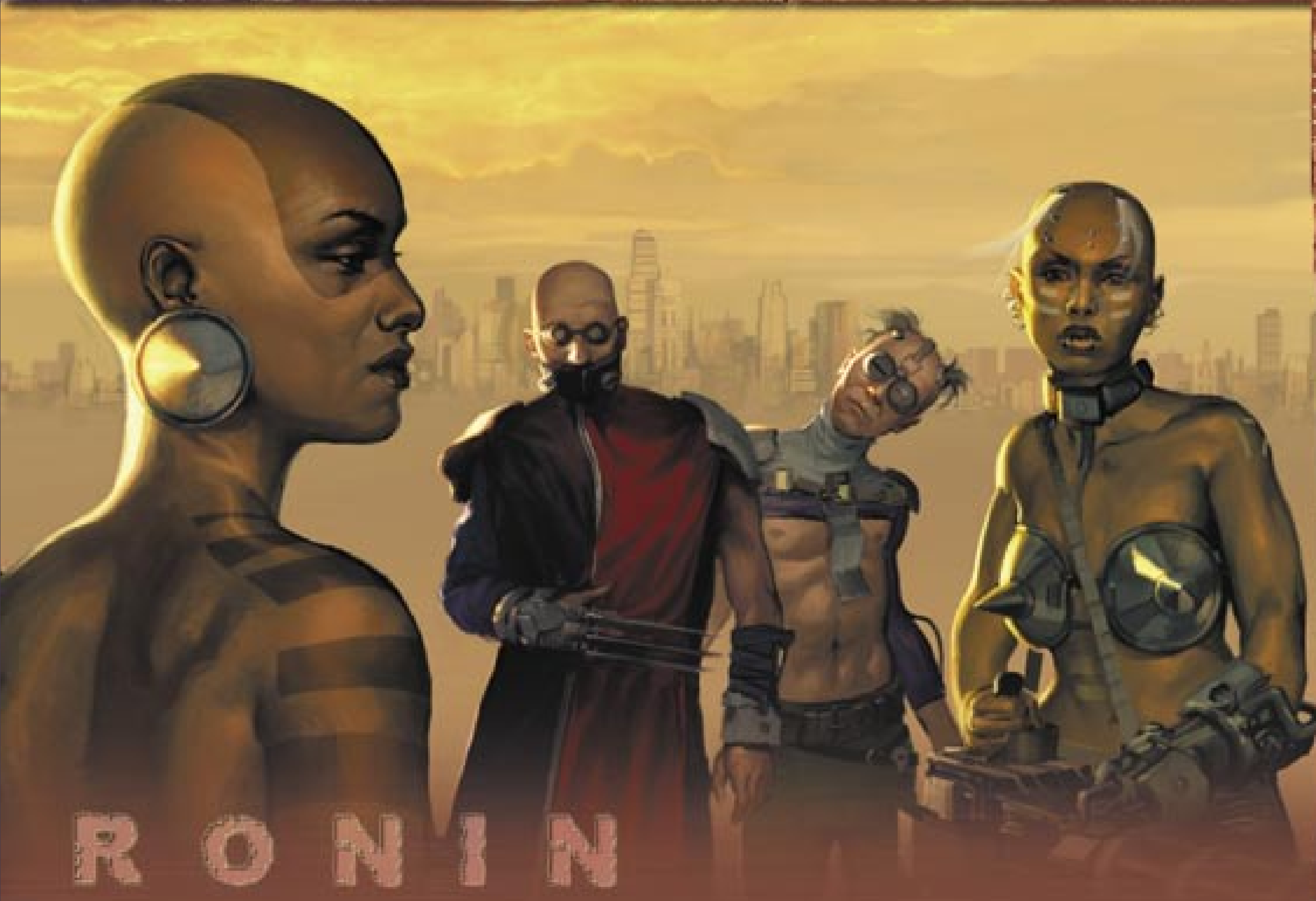
Wraith

Dravani
(Human Form)

Lektra Vassals



Peter Johnston



RONIN

Ronin Crew

Ghost

Second

Maven

Shootist

Fist

Shootist

Brick

Shootist

Espers

HARD
WiReD
hardwire grid access
キリン
キリン
C1

CSO Mars Camo

CSO Crew

Troopers

Engineer

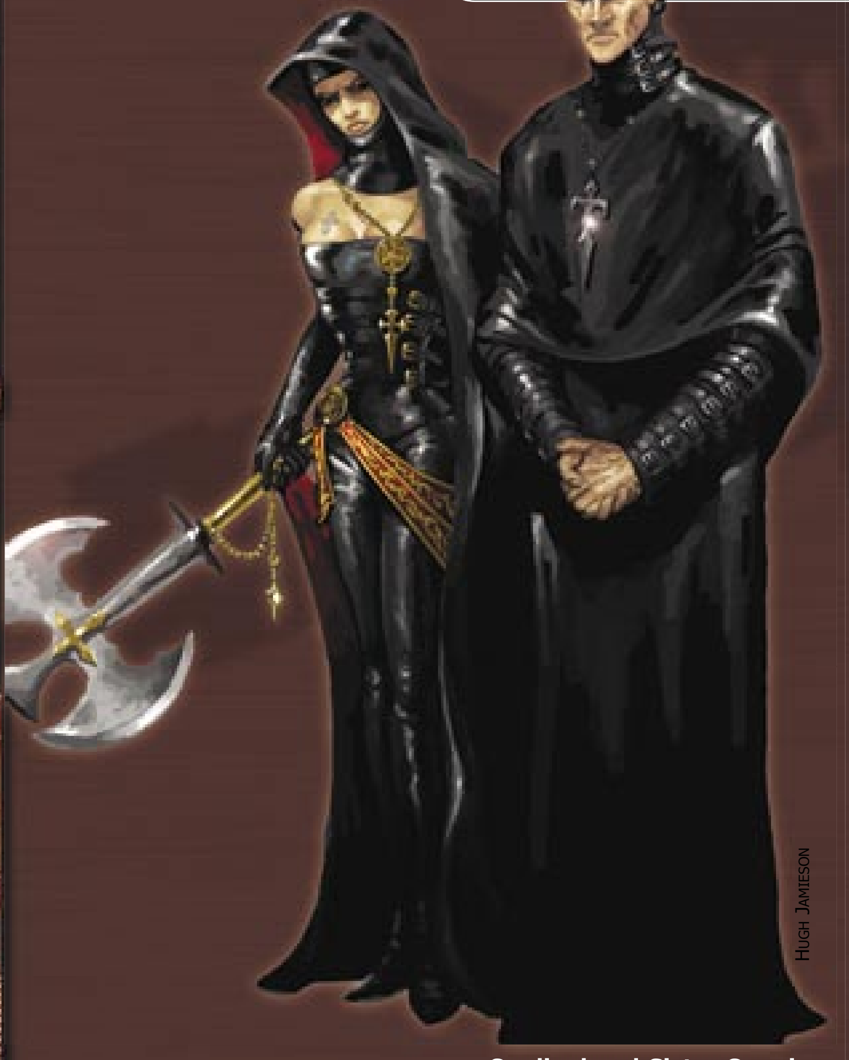
Rangers

Marshal

Marshal

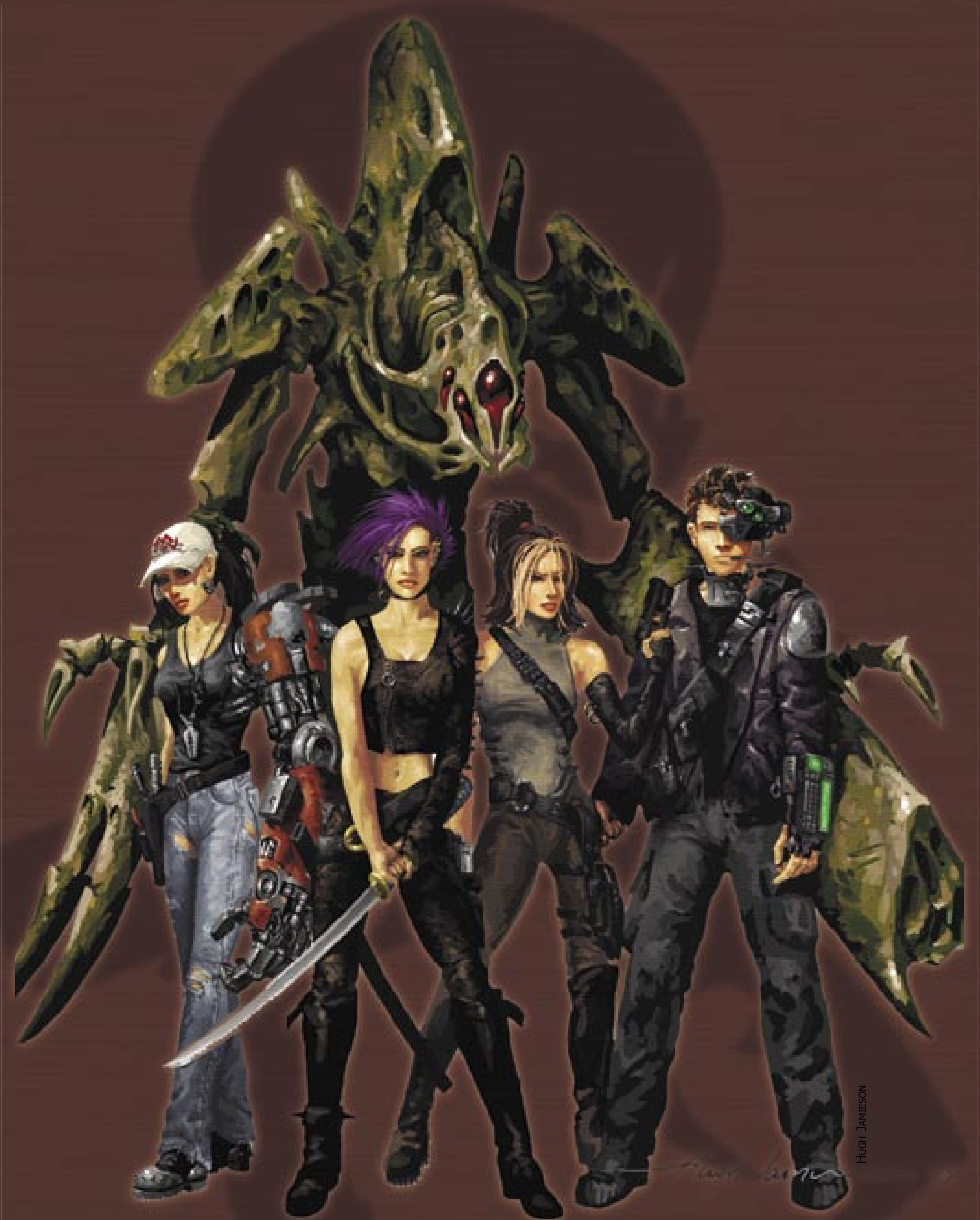
Special Weapons

VOODOO PETE'S
SPECIALS
SQUID
GUMBO
BAR
Today's Special
RAT GUMBO
FRIED
ALL SIDE

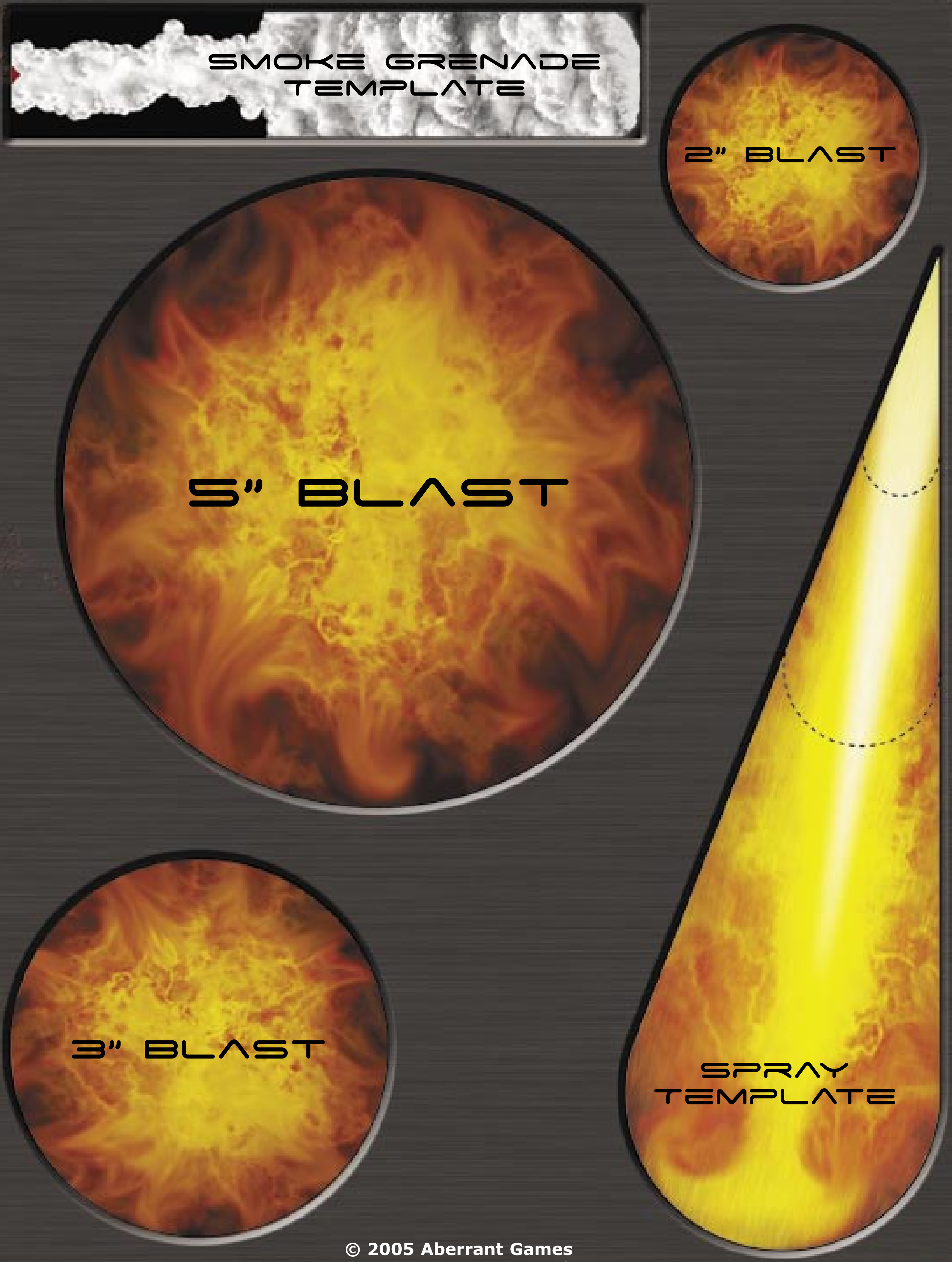


Hugh Jamieson

Cardinal and Sister Carmine


Hugh Jamieson

Charlie (transformed) and Bang-Bang's Gang


SMOKE GRENADE TEMPLATE
2" BLAST
5" BLAST
3" BLAST
SPRAY TEMPLATE

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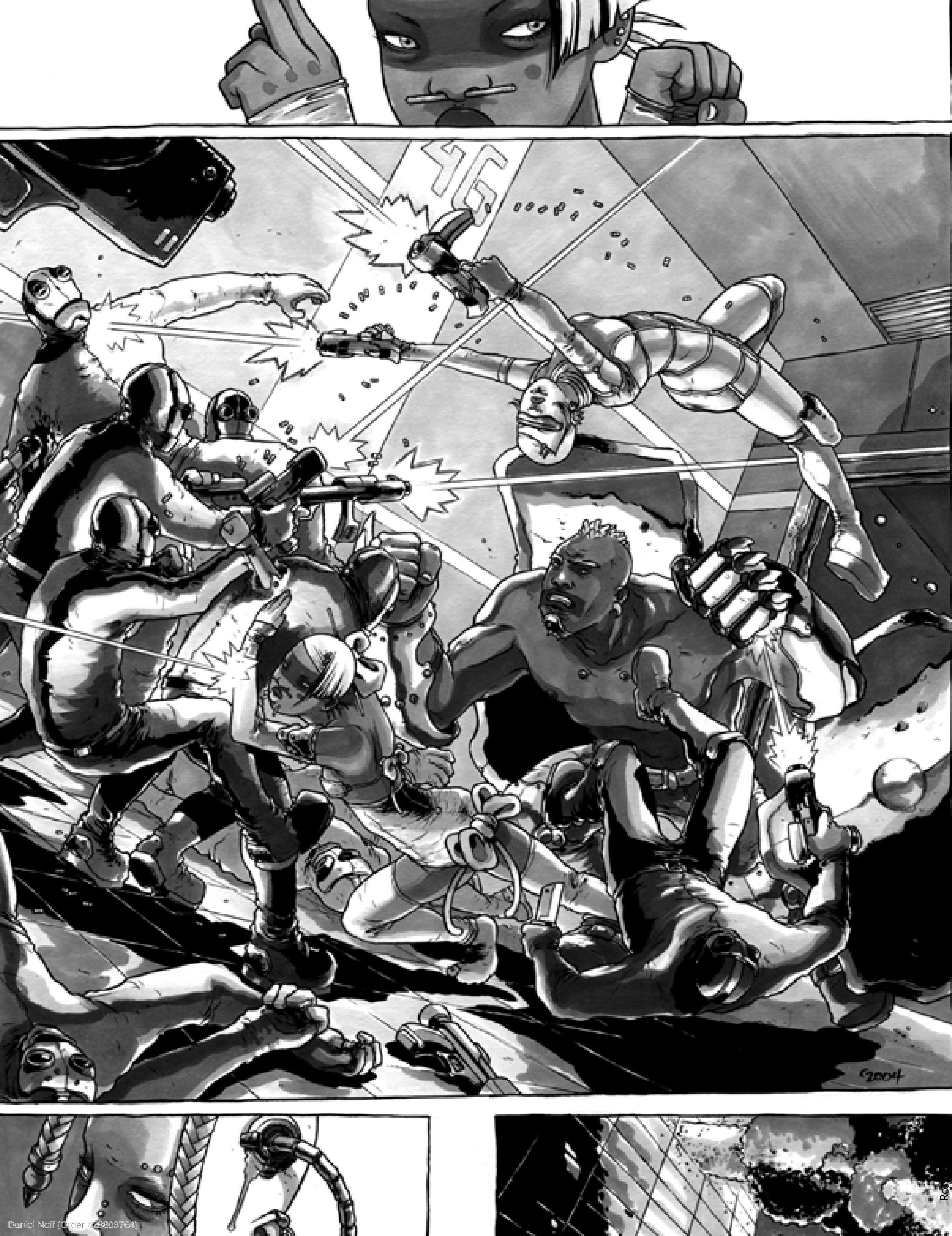
FACTIONS


2004

THE RONIN

The 22nd century has spawned a new type of war and a new type of warrior: highly trained individuals armed with black market weapons and back-street augmentations. With no allegiance to governments, nations or corporations, they wage a covert war for the highest bidder - these are the Ronin. Invisible and deadly, small crews of Ronin will strategically strike targets anywhere, from Earth to Mars and in between, with surgical precision. Their actions are publicly condemned, but they are still used by anyone with the power and the resources. Ronin can turn up on corporate response teams or even in CSO incursions into such places as the deadly mutant infested undercities. Their services are always in demand although nobody will ever officially admit to their existence. Folk heroes, criminals, rebels, they are all this and more.

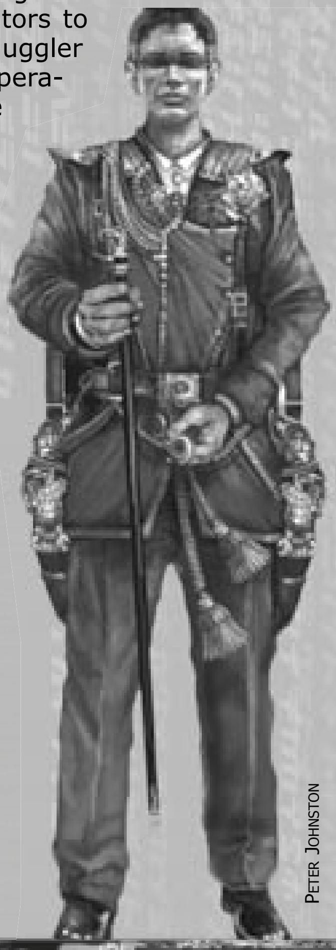
Most Ronin come from the harsh streets, where survival is a skill that even the youngest child has to learn. Unchipped and with no IDent records (they are often referred to as 'blanks') these individuals grow strong or perish. Most tend to join gangs around their seventh or eighth year, which provides a safety and companionship previously unknown by those who have grown up on the deadly streets of the outer cities. Some do prefer to strike out on their own, but they are usually doomed to a lonely and gruesome fate, either falling foul of slave rings, organ harvesters, feral animal packs or worse.

As the gangs gain notoriety, they may begin to draw the attention of a juggler. These shadowy and dangerous individuals balance life between the safety and scrutiny of the corporate zones and the lawless wilds of the wastelands and favelas. There are many people who need the services of those with extraordinary skills, who cannot be traced, and will pay handsomely for such services. The juggler has grown out of this need, filling the gap between the employee and the employer, providing a safety buffer and a guarantee of anonymity as just two of his 'essential services'. Due to the nature of their work and the balancing of these two very separate lives, jugglers are people to be respected, feared and never completely trusted. Many individuals from the slums and outer cities have mistaken a juggler for easy prey, thinking them there to sample the wicked and illicit delights available on the other side of the tracks; few have lived long enough to regret such foolishness. Most gangs are eager to win the attention and sponsorship of a juggler, for there is much to gain - better weapons and equipment, custom body modifications and, of course, wealth.

Initially, a juggler will usually stress test a gang on simple jobs, such as destroying a manufacturing plant or distracting authorities while an existing Ronin or Special Ops' crew pulls off the real job. Those that survive and prove themselves capable during these trials are taken to be nurtured and trained by Ronin already in the juggler's employ, until they are deemed ready to be unleashed without supervision. During the early years of a Ronin's career they are dependant on their juggler sponsor, but as they grow more experienced, their contacts grow until they are ready to go freelance. Most jugglers recognize their need for this and do not resist this natural progression, in fact, many openly encourage it, believing it builds stronger and more experienced crews.

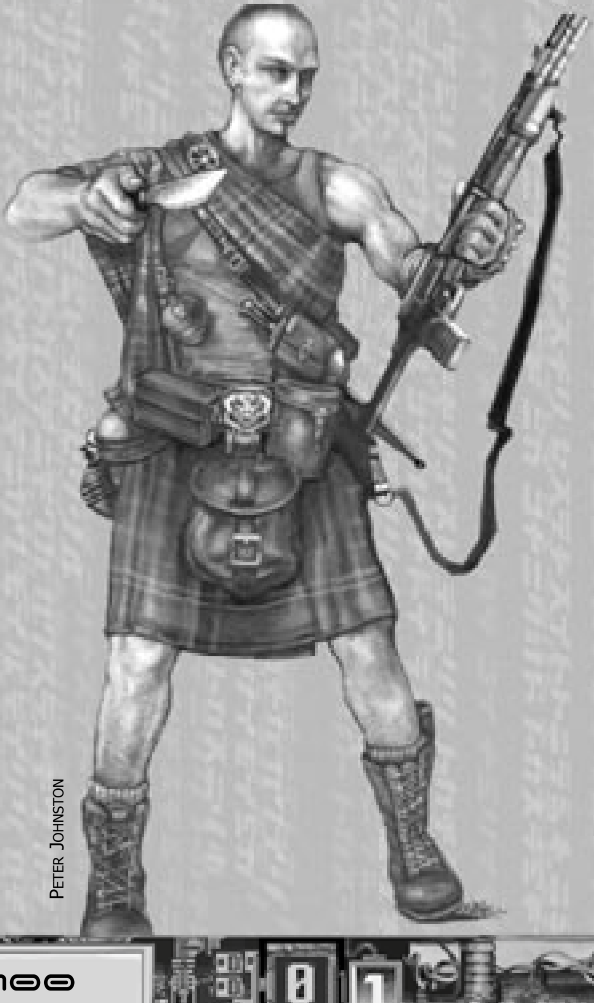
The one rule that is sacrosanct is you never work against your original sponsor; there have been a couple of cases in which this has happened and retribution has been swift, terrible and very public. This is one thing that no juggler can allow; whatever their own differences they all agree and the jugglers will stand together to bring such perpetrators to justice, including the juggler who sanctioned the operation. Because of the nature of their business, jugglers are naturally paranoid, but they must be able to trust their Ronin, at least to a certain degree…

A juggler must also look after his crew, for if they fail, it reflects on him and his abilities; too many failures and he may be considered obsolete, and an obsolete juggler is no use to anyone and will be considered a liability. As the juggler is in direct contact with the employer, they are privy to information that those concerned do not want made public. An employer


PETER JOHNSTON

has to trust his juggler as much as the juggler trusts his Ronin. If there is the slightest doubt about his integrity, high level contracts will be issued, and the juggler will find himself friendless, isolated and with a very short life expectancy. No matter how powerful the Ronin may seem, or how invulnerable the media may portray them, in they end they are but small groups of individuals who rely on stealth, surprise, and good training and equipment.

The streets are not the only places that provide Ronin: some have come from the inner cities seeking excitement and fortune, or just the need to disappear without a trace. Corporate security forces and even the ranks of the CSO have provided many great and infamous Ronin. These operatives initially provide some unique challenges as they are fully identified within the system, but this is nothing that the street surgeons of Nagoya, Rio de Janeiro, Marrakech, Taipei, and many other cities cannot solve - for the right price! New eyes, fingertips, facial reconstruction and even DNA manipulation along with the talents of a good ghost, can all help to make someone disappear. The initial cost of removing these potential Ronin from the system is incredibly high and, as a percentage never recover from the necessary surgeries, only very few make it from the regular world. Those that do are eagerly snapped up by crews or jugglers as they can provide a unique insight into the world they were so desperate to leave.



Peter Johnston

Named after the ancient Japanese term for masterless warrior, the Ronin of the 22nd century have far more than just martial arts experience to offer. They prefer to work together in close-knit groups with others that possess complimentary skills. These crews are sometimes the only true family a Ronin has ever known and operate much like street gangs rather than paramilitary organizations as they are sometimes portrayed by the media. Although the majority of citizens view the Ronin as dangerous criminals, they prefer to see themselves as freedom fighters and liberators of information. Popular opinion in the favelas and outer cities tout them as heroes and modern-day Robin Hoods, with the view that many corporate criminals and injustices would have not have come to light if it was not for their actions. Whenever there is exposure of corporate corruption, political scandal or an over-zealous use of force by the authorities, it is usually been the Ronin who have helped secure the information. Whether it is the uploading and dissemination of data and reports online to illegal Grid forums such as Rezolution DT or physically escorting independent media journos into secret corporate research facilities to reveal illegal corporate testing, the Ronin are always for hire. In reality they work for both sides of the law, yet all the while never forgetting their heritage of the streets. Corporate executives and conglomerated media curse them as criminals and worse, yet they still avail themselves of their services when necessary. The Grid is rife with rumors and reports of Unipol and the CSO occasionally hiring Ronin to look into, and sometimes to resolve, matters that they could not pursue within the bounds of the law. Ultimately, nobody knows - Ronin operations are not for open discussion, idle talk being as good as a noose around their neck…

Ronin usually set up a base in the outer cities or beyond and virtually never enter the ring of surveillance that exists in a central metropolis, unless of course they are on business. Some Ronin operate clubs or bars - safe-houses where deals can be struck amongst a crowd and any strangers will stand out. In these communities the Ronin are well respected and nothing happens without their knowledge or permission. Many still live within the favelas while others, bolder or more desperate, favor the cluster cities off-world; rag-tag assemblies of old stations and ships cobbled together and used as habitats for low income spacers, scrappies and worse. Cluster cities operate as laws unto themselves and are usually run by the resident crime boss. They provide a perfect bolt-hole for Ronin to disappear as even the CSO avoid boarding them and so there is little to fear from the outside world - apart from the constant threat of depressurization!

Though all Ronin have their own street tag or pseudonym, they are also known by archetypal names that designate their skills such as 'ghost', 'brick' or 'fist'. This enables a prospective employer to hire the appropriate talents for a designated assignment and also helps to protect their true identities, as the life of a Ronin is a paranoid existence. They may be part of a crew and may work regularly with one particular juggler, but they trust nobody. Brought up on the streets, having to watch their backs from an early age, Ronin are only too aware that life can easily be cut short. They have a complex nature and one that can never truly be understood; whatever leads them to this life, whether it is money, adventure, revenge or a more social agenda, a Ronin's motives are his own. They are not always honorable, for there are those amongst them that owe no affiliation to others; individuals who possess exceptional skills and whose solitary nature makes even other Ronin suspicious; and yet individuals of their caliber are rarely turned away when added to a crew.

From rumors and various Grid postings, it would seem that for many Ronin the ultimate ambition is to make one big score and retire somewhere in the off-world colonies, far away from their past lives. It would seem that few, if any, ever achieve this; occasionally someone will disappear from the scene and then rumors will fly that they boarded a sleeper and headed out to Centauri…… Usually a week or two goes by and then a survivor will show up with sobering stories of a mission gone awry and a crew getting hosed. No burials, no services, nobody to even know where they went, what happened or who they really were; just another tag vanished from the list of potential employees, with only a few greasy soot stains on some corporate furnace as a final epitaph.

RONIN SPECIAL RULES

Mercenary

Ronin not only operate as a faction by themselves, but they may also be hired as Mercs by other factions to supplement their crews with the following additional force restrictions:

1. No more than 25% of a crew can be hired as Mercs
2. Only one Maven and one Second can be hired as part of a Merc force.
3. Standard Ronin rules and restrictions apply.

MAVEN

"Jay - you, Murphy and Eric head left and straight through to the central processor. Finn, Banner, you're with me. We'll take out the main power and cause as much destruction as possible. This should give you guys the time you need to crack the system and get out with the minimum amount of resistance. Noah, Izumi, keep the pad clear for take-off and make sure we have a clear line of retreat. Keep com chatter to a minimum."

"Sounds like a plan." Finn slid back the bolt and flicked off the safety on his P-74, "The type of plan I like…"

The Maven is as near Ronin come to having an official leader; not only are they competent in all the necessary skills, but they have a shrewd and cunning mind for strategy. To many of them, a successful mission is the one where not one shot is fired, although there are others that revel in chaos and violence and choose their crew members accordingly. Whatever their personal styles, Maven have to be extremely charismatic and strong-willed as the best Ronin crews are made up of very independent and dominant characters; without an assertive force, they can rapidly unravel and become a danger to themselves and a risk for their Juggler. Although Maven do not have to be liked by their crew, they have to be respected and their orders obeyed without question; without this trust and unspoken commitment they could not function and succeed in the deadly games that are their stock and trade.

A Maven is not something many aspire to be as it places the individual in a very dangerous position, being the one that has to answer for his crew's success or failure and the direct contact with their Juggler and other 'business' associates. Mistakes sometimes do happen, but they are never tolerated, as failure is not acceptable to those that are paying for their services. The Maven in charge when such an error occurs is usually quietly retired and a replacement is chosen from within the current crew. Most Jugglers prefer to choose a new Maven from the Shootists: they do not have a tendency to get so 'up close and personal' as other members of a crew and generally have a better overview of situations than those engaged in close combat or hardwired to the Grid. It is not to say, however, that there are not some very successful Ronin crews led by Ghosts, Fists and even Bricks!

MAVEN DATA

Class: Human

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV	REP
5	4	3	3	3	5	3

Points: 58 **Armor:** 2

			-1	-2	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

The Maven has the choice of carrying either an Assault Rifle or a Combat Shotgun, not both.

Assault Rifle

Range: 10/22" -1LR **Damage:** 5d6 P1

Special: Can be used for suppressing fire at short range.

Combat Shotgun

Range: 2/4/8” **Damage:** 8d6/6d6/4d6

Special: Spray template

Dual Smart Pistols

The pistol link fitted snugly into the jack in his forearm; flicking it to active, the weapons’ readout came to life in his optical overlays.

Range: 8/16" -1LR **Damage:** 5d6 P1

Special: May choose to fire twice per turn at -1 RCA per shot or once as normal.

Smoke Grenades

Range: Thrown (BDY+5”) **Damage:** None

Special: Smoke Grenade template. Blocks line of sight.

Roll 1d6 each control phase smoke stays in play to see what happens to the template; 1-3 remove template; 4-5 template stays in play; 6 moves randomly.

Snap Blades

His chromed fist connected with the Enforcer’s jaw, followed by a brief popping noise as the Snap Blades shot out through his skull, released at incredible speed from the Maven’s augmented hand.

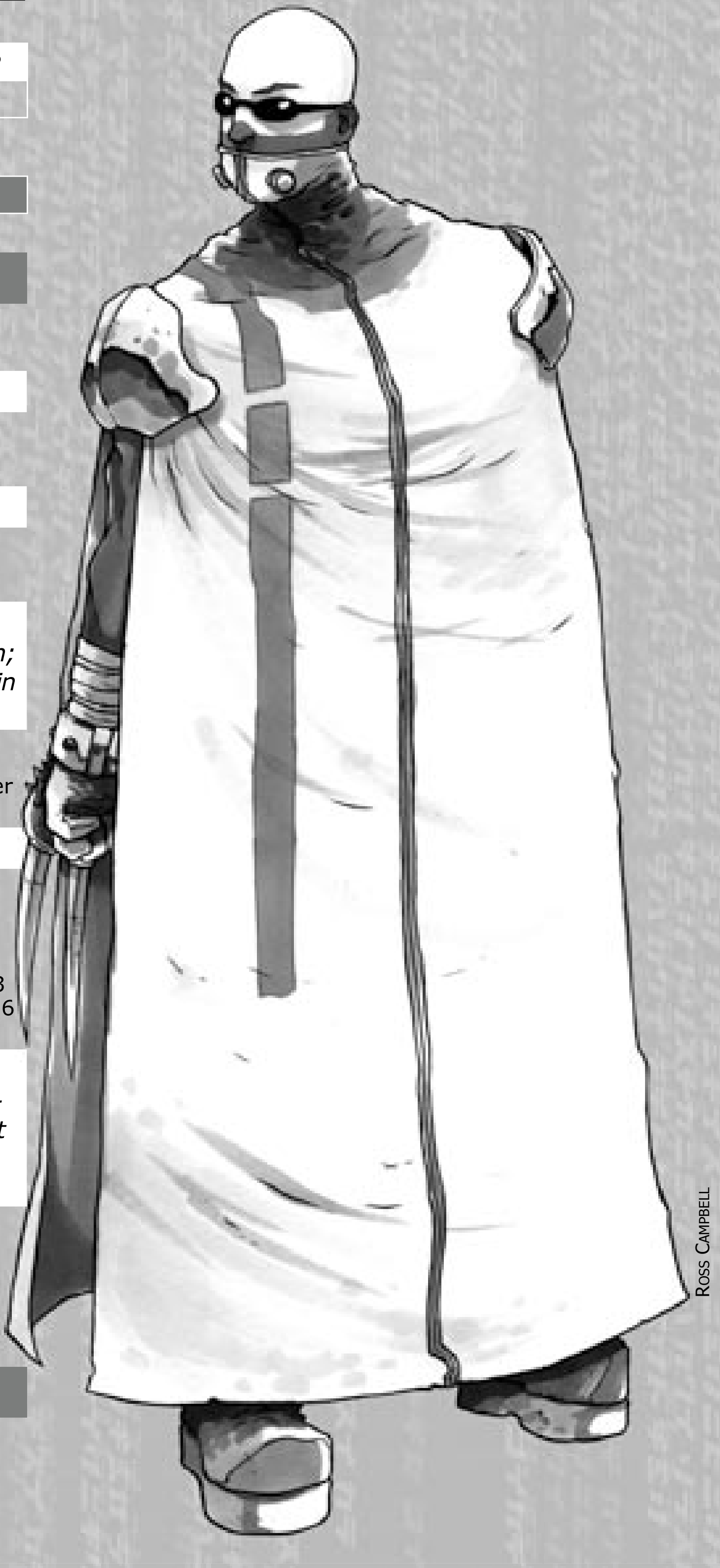
Range: Close Combat only **Damage:** 4d6

Special: Parry - model may add +2 to their CCA score in close combat, but if their score is greater than their opponent, they do no damage and the combat is considered a draw.

SKILLS & ABILITIES:

- Keen Eye
- Run ‘n’ Gun
- Snap Shot
- Leadership
- Shrug-it-Off

Crew Allowance: 1
Independent


Ross Campbell

SECOND

The lifeless guard dropped from Jay's hands as he stepped out of the shadows; reaching down, he hauled the body back to the small storage room they had just passed. Eric tried to ignore the way the man's head flopped back and forth as he was heaved unceremoniously into the dark.

"Ok, you two, lets move out, we've still got a way to go to the central core."

Everyone needs someone to rely on and this is where the crew's Second comes into play. Whether the position is a stepping stone on the way to becoming a Maven or whether he is just content to see himself as a trusted associate and confident, the Second has many of the skills of the Maven. It is common for the Second to run interference for the main team or to take command of part of the crew during a mission, and he is fully capable of leading a team and completing the objectives.

How a Second handles his position depends on his motivation. Some are driven by the burning desire to become a Maven and are always jockeying for position with their leader. The air of conflict this brings to a team can often add a certain edge to their assignments, providing it never goes so far as a real challenge to the existing leadership. Perhaps the best from the Maven's point of view is a Second who has come to terms with the position and fully understands its vital role. This one acts as a buffer between the Maven and the crew, allowing the Maven to maintain respect and a level of detachment impossible without the position of a good right-hand man. The Second (or number two) listens to the gripes from the crew, explains the details of the Maven's plans and attends to the everyday stuff like ammo levels, new equipment and food for the crew.

Ross Campbell

If the Maven is the fuel that creates the spark and gets things moving, and the crew is the engine that gets down and dirty, then the Second is the grease that insures it all runs smoothly.

SECOND DATA

Class: Human

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV	REP
5	3	3	3	3	4	1

Points: 43 **Armor:** 2

			-1	-2	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

The Ronin Second has the choice of carrying either an Assault Rifle or a Pulse Gun, not both.

Assault Rifle

Range: 10/22" -1LR **Damage:** 5d6 P1

Special: Can be used for suppressing fire at short range.

Heavy Pistol

Range: 8/18" -2LR **Damage:** 4d6 P1

Mono-Blades

I looked closer; what I had first thought was an ordinary sword, was covered with almost invisible ridges. "Be careful," he warned. "Run your finger on that and it'll come off without you even realizing it!"

Range: Close Combat only **Damage:** 4d6

Special: Parry - model may add +2 to their CCA score in close combat, but if their score is greater than their opponent they do no damage and the combat is considered a draw.

Smoke Grenades

Range: Thrown (BDY+5") **Damage:** None

Special: Smoke Grenade template. Blocks line of sight.

Roll 1d6 each control phase smoke stays in play to see what happens to the template; 1-3 remove template; 4-5 template stays in play; 6 moves randomly.

Pulse Gun

It was like being hit in the chest with a brick, a brick that proceeded to electrocute me. I woke up twenty minutes later puking into the gutter, with the action long over."

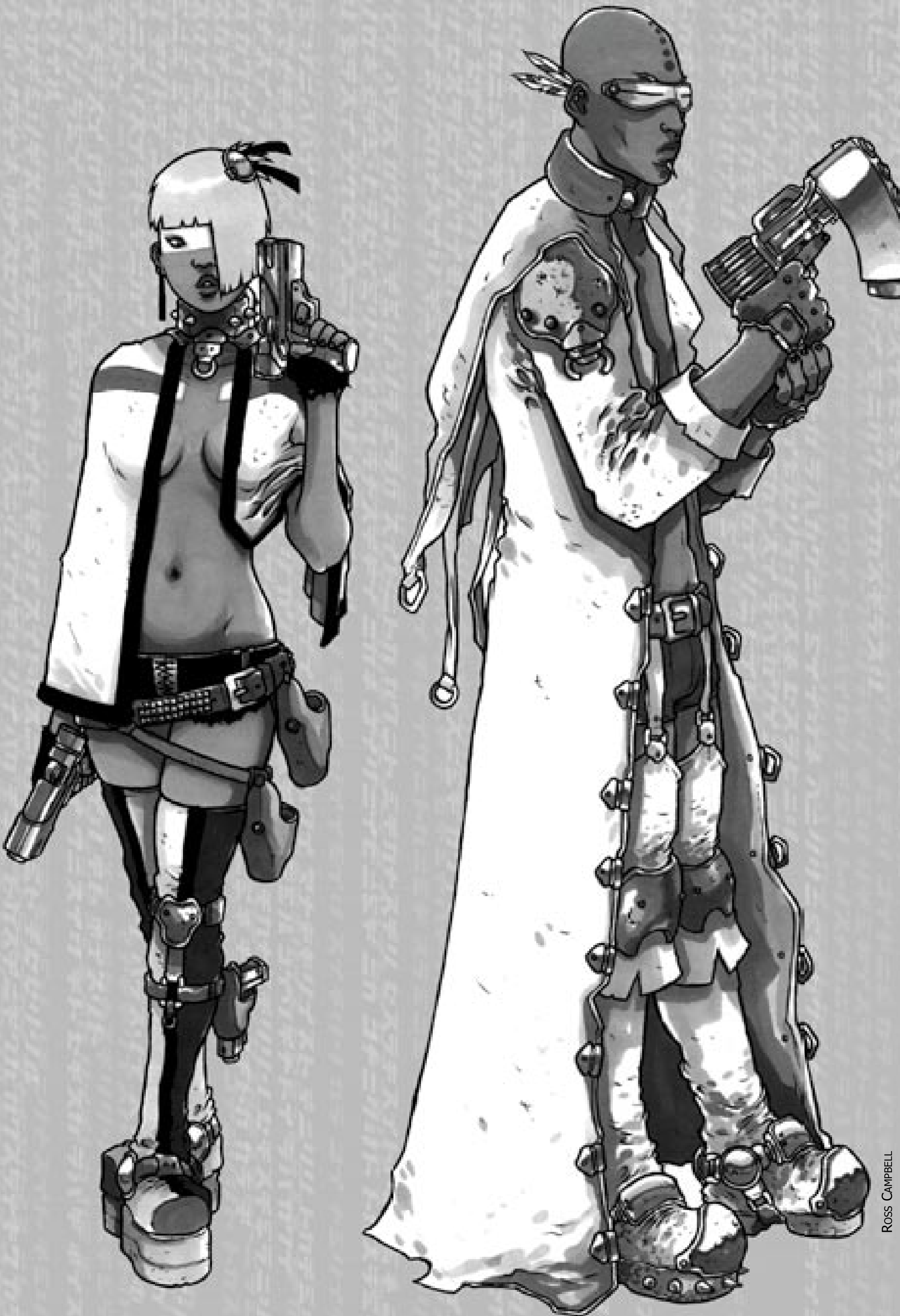
Range: 8/16" -1LR **Damage:** 4d6 P1(2)

Special: Critical Stun – on the roll of a 6 during damage the model is stunned and must roll a 4, 5 or 6 during the control phase to regain consciousness and be able to activate as normal during the round.

SKILLS & ABILITIES:

- Keen Eye
- Shrug-it-Off
- Leadership

Crew Allowance: 0-1
Independent


Ross Campbell

SHOOTIST

A rose blossomed on the guard's forehead, followed in quick succession by three brief blooms on the chest of his colleague as Finn casually strolled up the corridor.

"I'm getting movement. Looks like we've been blown; six warm bodies approaching from our right, Finn - deal with it. We'll continue as planned and meet you at the rendezvous point."

"Sure, no problem, you girls have fun now." He slammed another clip into place and took off at a brisk run. Turning the corner, he almost barreled straight into the first guard; instinctively he threw himself backwards and began to fire, tracing from groin to head on the first unlucky SecuriClones. Luckily his slide backwards had brought him to a corner and as he reached it, he rolled over and out of sight of the two remaining guards that had not been brought down by his fire. Reluctant to leave a job unfinished, he swung back around the corner and completed the task with a stream of bullets. He ejected the spent magazines and he looked down at his handiwork.

"I'll be damned if I'm cleaning that mess up!" and set off after his comrades.

In many places in the 22nd century, firearms are as much a part of daily life as eating and the Shootist would not have it any other way. Most children brought up in the favelas have at least a basic weapon proficiency before they are ten years old, which for a future Shootist rapidly develops into an obsession. By the time they are thirteen and if they can afford an NI, additional sockets and modifications are already being planned, enabling them to link directly with their weapons for better accuracy and increased response time. Many Shootists take this merging of flesh and weapon even further by additional body mods such as muscle reflex spikes or eye replacements, this last modification giving them such optional extras as special zoom features, night vision, infra-red, thermal and much more. With the introduction in recent years of the smart gun, more potential Shootists have appeared than ever before, although many consider this new breed as pretenders. The smart gun is the first implementation of an independent AI in a weapon and is currently most often seen in larger handguns. Once linked, the weapon will take over reflex and targeting control of its owner increasing a user's response time by up to twenty percent! When linked to someone with a natural talent and an agile body, it is a deadly threat, but fortunately these weapons are still quite uncommon, mostly seen in use by corporate executives who do not have the physical prowess to use them to their full potential.

Out of all Ronin, the Shootists are the most aware of others' 'work' in their field, even going so far as having a bizarre mutual appreciation of their achievements. Most successful Ronin will not talk of their missions, but many Shootists are natural braggers. Details of an operation are never revealed, but often stories are passed around about an 'impossible shot' or how someone outnumbered ten to one managed to take down a whole security team without getting scratched! For the professional Shootist these are not idle boasts, but a matter of professional pride.

SHOOTIST DATA

Class: Human

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV
5	4	2	3	3	3

Points: 49 **Armor:** 2

			-1	-2	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

The Ronin Shootist has the choice of carrying either an Assault Rifle or Dual Smart Pistols, not both.

Assault Rifle

"The perfect weapon - I've done a few mods, of course, but I can assure you Unipol wouldn't still be using them if they weren't one of the best all-rounders you can buy - or steal for that matter," he replied with a wink.

Range: 10/22" -1LR **Damage:** 5d6 P1

Special: Can be used for suppressing fire at short range.

Combat Knife

Range: Close Combat only **Damage:** 2d6

Dual Smart Pistols

His arm jerked unconsciously as the weapon tracked the target for him; with a thought he unleashed a hail of bullets, pinning his opponent to the siding.

Range: 8/16" -1LR **Damage:** 5d6 P1

Special: May choose to fire twice per turn at -1 RCA per shot or once as normal.

Grenades

Range: Thrown (BDY+5") **Damage:** 4d6

Special: 3" Blast template

Machine Pistol

Range: 6/14" -2LR **Damage:** 5d6/3d6

Special: Automatic

SKILLS & ABILITIES:

- Run 'n' Gun
- Snap Shot

Crew Allowance: 0+

GHOST

Crouching down by the processor, Eric ran his hand lovingly over the vacuum-formed surface. Moving himself comfortably into the small corner, he pressed his cheek against the warm plastic and, closing his eyes, listened to the gentle hum of the processors.

"Eric, speed it up. This isn't a first date; you need to go all the way, straight away," snapped Jay.

Looking up, Eric pulled the retractable cable from his neck implant and whispered, "This doesn't mean I won't respect you in the morning," as he plugged himself in.

As the central core washed over him, his physical form shuddered and released a sigh of pleasure before slumping limply to the floor. Quickly pulling back from his reverie, he noted a number of automatic defense programs had detected his presence; damn that was fast, he had only just slid in. Eric readied a number of defensive programs and initiated his attack routine.

"If you like to play rough, that's ok, baby. Any way you want to play is just fine with me."

Information is power, and the Grid is information incarnate. This intangible world is as real as the rock we stand on and yet as insubstantial as smoke. The key to retrieving this information is held by those who ply the electronic highways of the Grid; there are many who will pay handsomely for it and Ghosts usually embody the mixture of skill, greed, inquisitiveness and ego to carry it off.

The soporific attractions of the compulsive Grid user has produced more theories and books than any other subject in recent years, often seeing the addiction, but failing to understand the burgeoning culture of Grid jockeys and zombies. The zombie is the more mundane user, tired from the repetition and oppression of daily life, seeking entertainment, company and feelings of empowerment. They will never receive this in the waking world, but it is theirs by membership of any one of the myriad number of 'fantasy' simulations available for a fee. By contrast, the Grid jockey plays a more active part in online culture, forming forums of like-minded individuals that wish to see how far they can push this new electronic world. Often arrogant and prideful, filled with their own worth and invincibility, it is from these groups that the majority of hackers and Ghosts arise.

The name Ghost is said to be derived from the idea of the human conscious, free from its body and existing in a non-physical form. However, some argue it is in homage to the infamous hacker, Bastik, the friendly Ghost from the late 21st century. Bastik operated as a vigilante against corporate crime, posting everything from a company's 'real' financial accounts, to Unipol friendly-fire casualty lists. For more than two years, the unknown hacker was a constant thorn in the side of the corporate world. That was until he posted an old document from the Xenone archives that detailed how they used vagrants and orphans picked up from their 'charitable institutions' as live fire targets, intending to accurately assess new munitions' damage on human bodies. The report had hardly appeared, before it disappeared - as did Bastik. Very few saw the report and it quickly faded into Grid myth, but the legend of Bastik the friendly Ghost lived on, inspiring thousands more to take up the mantle and challenge the inherent corruption in the system… and if they get paid to do it, all the better!

A crew's Ghost, although usually slight and physically frail, is always one of the key elements to the success or failure of a mission. The Ghost will do much of the prep work, from pulling schematics and building blueprints to probing the security system, learning schedules and duty rosters. When the time comes to act, the Ghost must mask a crew's presence, as where there is of something of value there is constant surveillance. In the early days of the Ronin, a Ghost was able to execute his part of the mission from a safe house on the other side of the world, but due to improvements in security and new AI systems, a Ghost must try to access his objective at the source. This is not without risks from ICE or Wraiths, the Ghost's corporate counterpart; if the Ghost fails against any of these adversaries the effects can be deadly as although these conflicts exist in the electronic world, modern countermeasures send huge power surges in place of physical attacks, frying users and systems. Very few survive such assaults and those that do either spend the rest of their lives in a psyche ward or roaming the streets muttering to themselves.

Ghost go a lot further than having simple neural interfaces and often have their skulls crammed with data dumps and backup systems; many view their physical forms as an unnecessary hindrance, the anchor that keeps them from the perfection of existence in purely electronic form. A few have tried letting their body waste away, hoping their consciousness will continue to exist in the digital domain, backed up by numerous servers and drives; there has never been any evidence of success although rumors have always existed of 'ghosts in the machine.'

GHOST DATA

Class: Cyborg

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV	HAK
6	2	1	3	2	3	3

Points: 23 **Armor:** 2

		-1	-2	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

9mm Pistol

Range: 6/14" -2LR **Damage:** 3d6

Combat Knife

Range: Close Combat only **Damage:** 2d6

Remote Board

Yeah, I know it looks like a basic Rad Shop model, but believe me this honey's souped - I've even got a APAC crystal-matrix drive in it.

Range: 12” +1

SMG

Just pull and point as long as they are close enough, this'll do the rest; no worries.

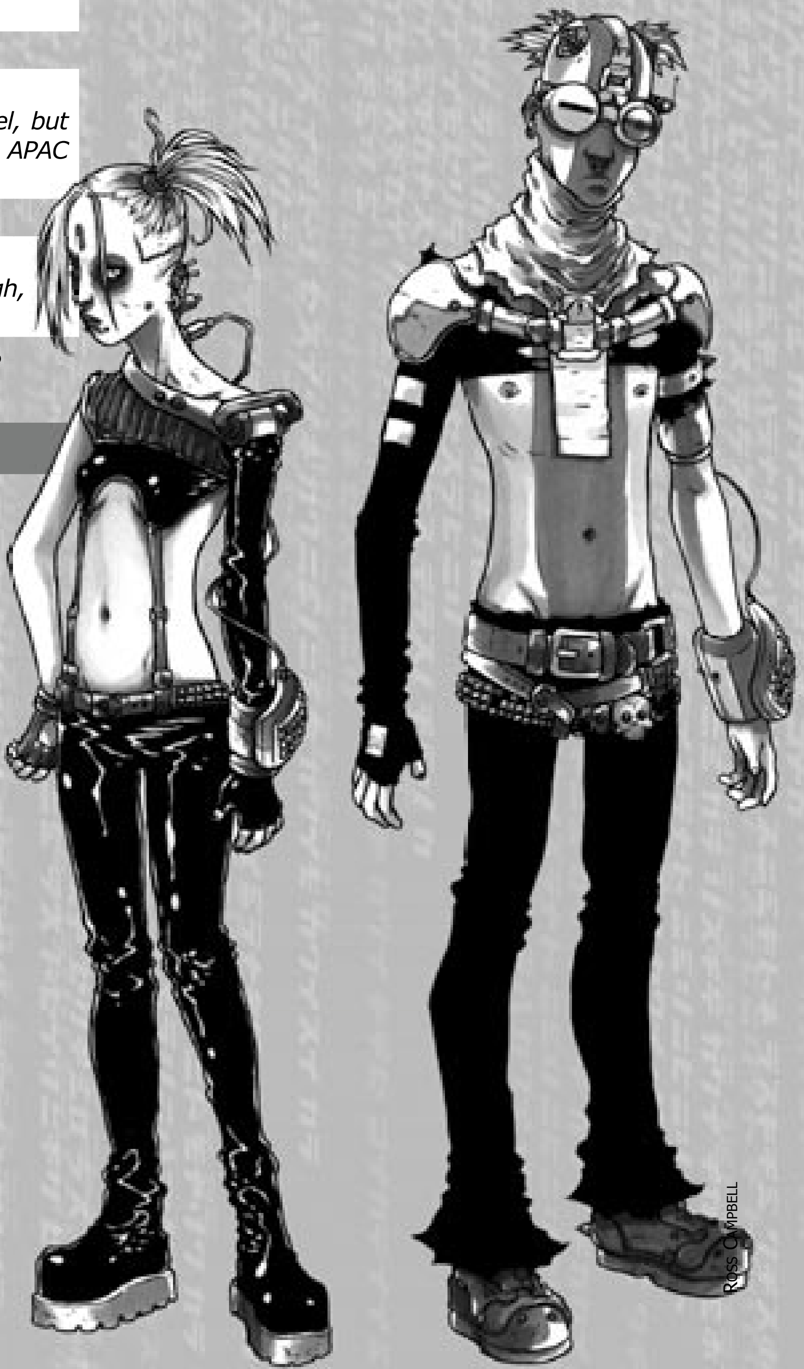
Range: 8/16" -2LR **Damage:** 6d6/4d6

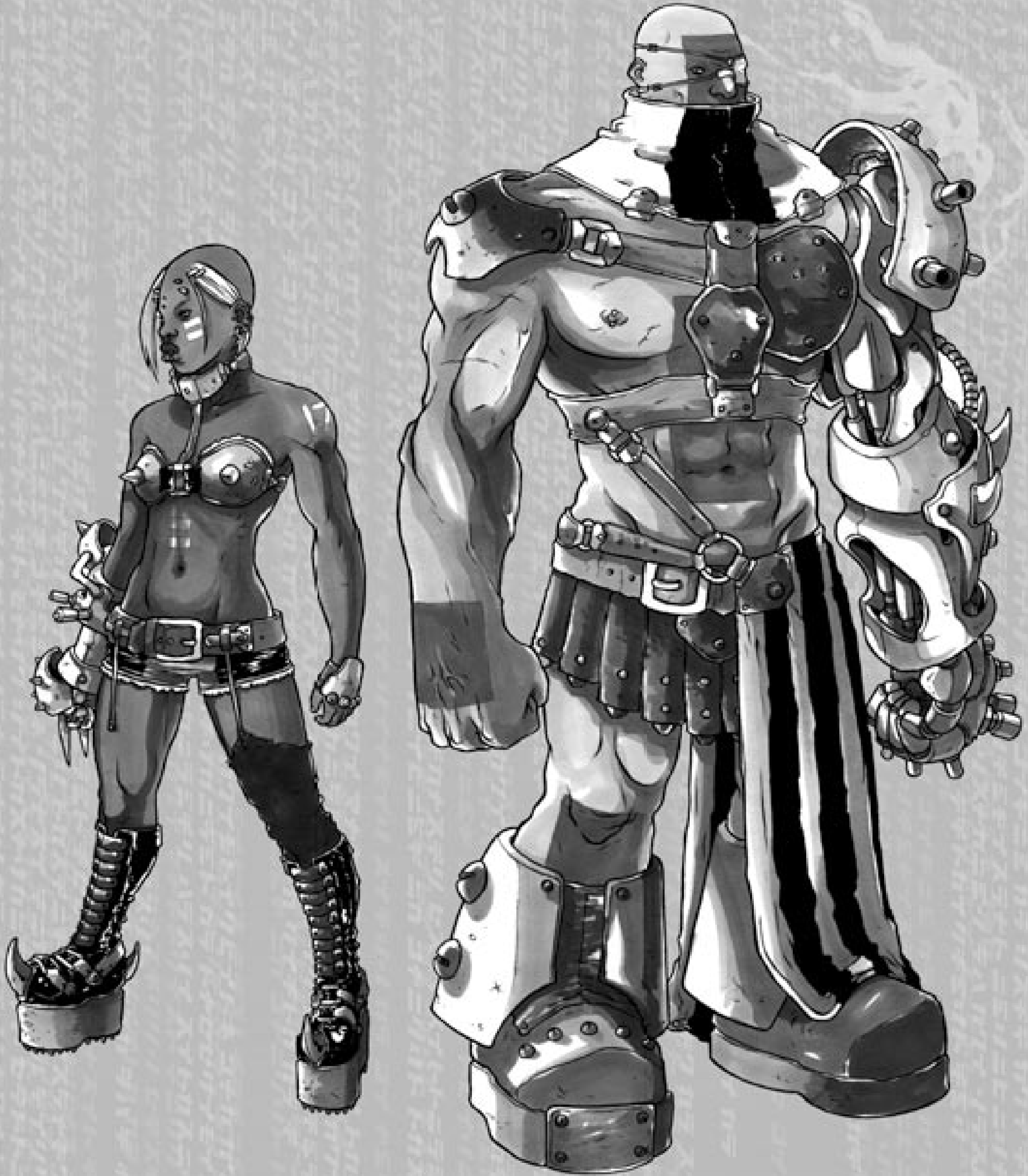
Special: Automatic

SKILLS & ABILITIES:

- Sneak

Crew Allowance: 0-3





Ross Campbell

BRICK

"Noah, we're at the junction box, now how do we get it open?"

Before he received a reply, Banner reached over him and peeled the box from its mounting; in a shower of sparks the corridor was plunged into darkness.

"Forget it, its down!"

By the mid 21st century medical limb replacements had become commonplace and by the latter half of the century many had turned to prosthetic and bionic replacements for more aesthetic reasons - a new boom in cosmetic surgery had begun. Corporations and governments had already seen a more profitable use for this burgeoning new industry and were augmenting their agents to make them more effective in the field. The general public new nothing of this, although popular primetime shows such as *Maxi-Man* gave them a fictional insight into this growing trend in covert operations. Replacement limbs were only the start as medical science expanded the melding of cybernetic systems with flesh and bone. Boosting an agent's speed and strength was only the beginning; soon agents were being fitted with eyes that increased magnification and could see in multiple spectrums, flexible armor fitted directly under the skin, and ribs reinforced and grafted together - there seemed no end to man's ingenuity at customizing himself. There was even a brief period where people were getting weapons grafted directly onto limbs, although this proved massively impractical as they ended up getting arrested every time they went grocery shopping! This was never acceptable for serious operatives, but flared briefly as an option among certain street gangs and led to some hilarious footage on Unipol's Stupidest Criminals!

The emergence of the Brick came, as did most pop culture phenomena, from the youth sub-culture in the outer cities and favelas, born out of a strange hybrid between the body modification counter-culture and extreme bodybuilding. Pumping themselves full of growth hormones, steroids and other muscle building drugs, they twisted the human frame to new limits. However, this was only the beginning and bionic enhancements were the next natural step when they could no longer take the physical body any further. Although society in general considers it unacceptable to show any physical signs of augmentation, Bricks love to show their raw power and often get limbs specially designed to advertise their prowess. Not effective as a stealth or infiltration agent, a Brick is still an essential part of a crew, adding an incredible amount of strength and durability to the mix.

BRICK DATA

Class: Human

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV
4	2	3	2	4	3

Points: 58 **Armor:** 2

					-1	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

The Brick has the choice of carrying either a launcher or a Mini-Gun, not both.

Heavy Pistol

Range: 8/18" -2LR **Damage:** 4d6 P1

Launcher

I couldn't look at the smoking pit which now contained the charred remains of the four men that had stood there just moments ago.

Range: 10/24" -1LR **Damage:** 4d6

Special: 5" Blast template

Move or Fire - model may not move and fire this weapon during its turn.

Mini-Gun

I heard the whine of the motor and threw myself to the floor, pulling Tania with me as the office exploded in splinters and plaster.

Range: 10/20" -2LR **Damage:** 8d6/5d6

Special: Automatic

Move or Fire - model may not move and fire this weapon during its turn.

Model receives additional damage dice on the damage rolls of a 5 or 6, instead of just the usual 6.

SKILLS & ABILITIES:

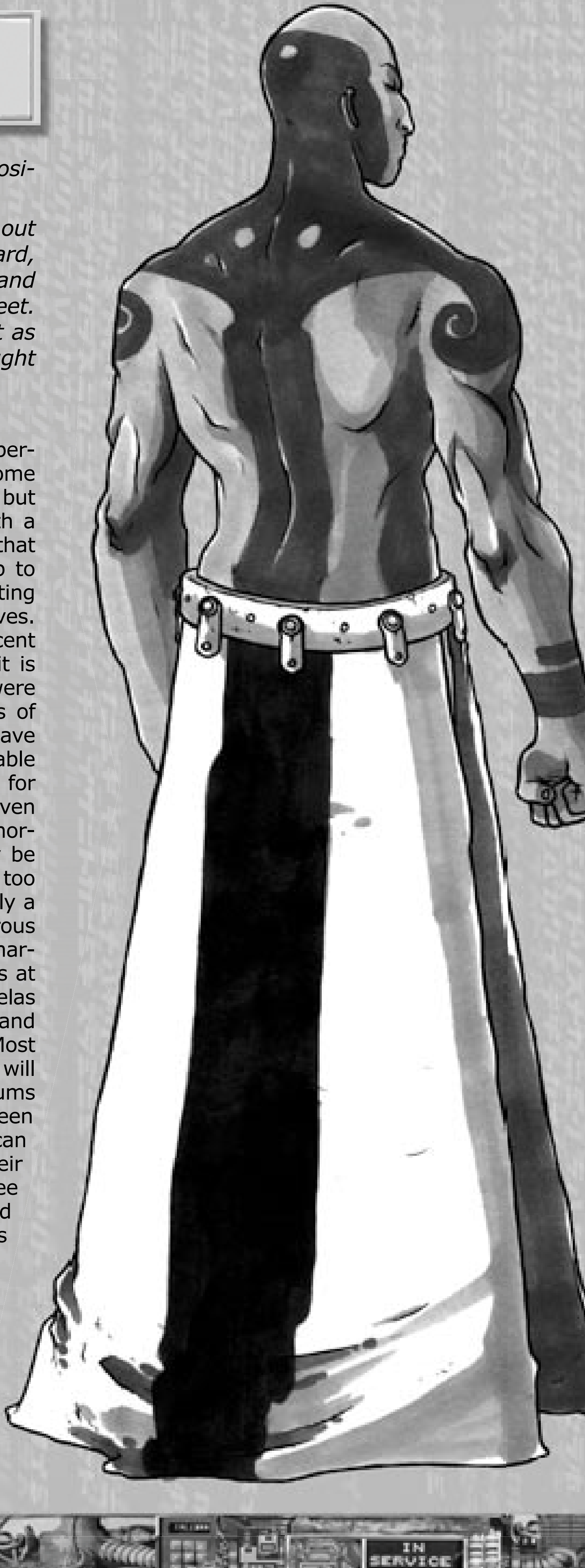
- Pummel
- Sturdy
- Shrug-it-Off

Crew Allowance: 0-4
Independent

FIST

Izumi raised himself slowly from his sitting position, "Prepare yourself, they're coming."

Noah went for his gun as three guards burst out from the building. Izumi lazily stepped forward, stretching his limbs out as if just waking up, and then it was over. The two guards lay at Izumi's feet. Noah wasn't sure where the third one was, but as he cleared his pistol from its holster, he thought he'd seen him 'fly' off the side of the building.



There have always been those who have sought perfection physically, mentally and spiritually. To some the Fist is the living embodiment of these ideals, but is far more than exhaustive physical training with a pinch of philosophy. Research has discovered that these individuals have a similar genetic make-up to those with Craft powers, but rather than manifesting itself externally, the power lies within themselves. Nothing more than theories exist to explain the recent rise in individuals with Craft abilities. Many say it is nothing more than a stable mutation and they were fortunate not to be cast out amongst the others of their kind in the undercities. However, those that have the powers of the Fist are even more perplexing: able to make their skin as hard as stone and to move for short periods of time at incredible speeds. It is even said the greatest Fists can kill an army before a normal man can strike a single opponent. This may be an urban myth, but it is best to never let one get too close. For those that become a Fist, it is not simply a matter of being gifted, it also takes years of rigorous training in close combat techniques and various martial arts. Potential Fists are sought out by Jugglers at an early age, often sending agents among the favelas to scan for those with the right genetic make-up and then purchase or steal them from their parents. Most are willing to let their offspring go, knowing they will have a chance at a better future than in the slums and wastelands. Finding a suitable candidate between the ages of ten and eleven is preferable so they can begin training at least a couple of years before their abilities manifest. By the age of thirteen, the trainee is already versed in multiple methods of unarmed combat; with the onset of their powers there begins another couple of years of rigorous training before they are deemed ready for their first assignment.

The process of creating a Fist is a lengthy and expensive one for a Juggler, but once complete they are the perfect operatives. With no need for weapons and no electronic augmentations, a Fist can penetrate almost any facility or city without raising the alarm. Once inside, it is usually too late to stop them!

FIST DATA

Class: Human

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV
6	3	4	4	3	3

Points: 52 **Armor:** 2

			-1	-2	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

Shuriken

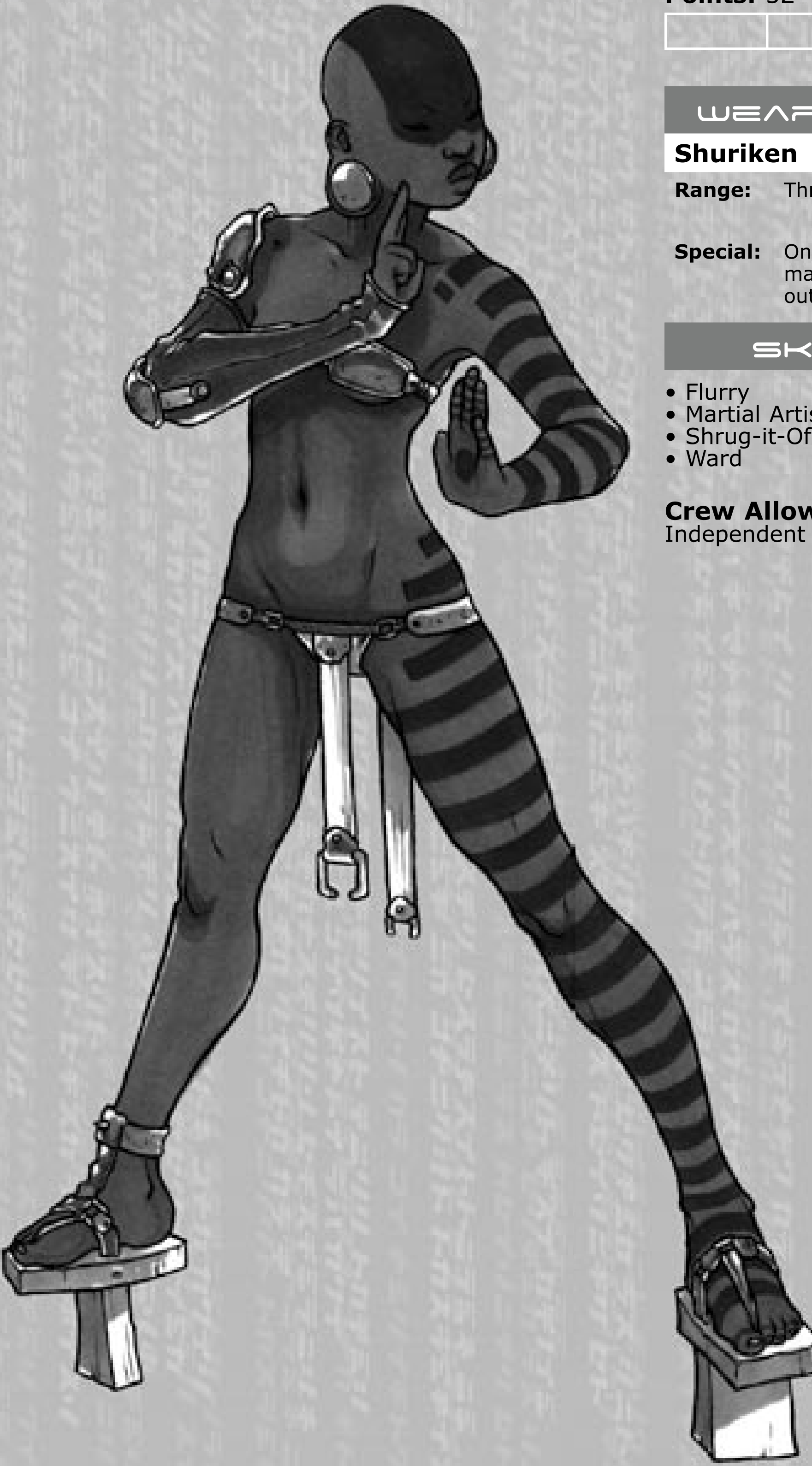
Range: Thrown (BDY+5”) **Damage:** 3d6 per Shuriken

Special: On hitting your target roll a d3 to see how many Shuriken have hit it. Damage is worked out as normal per individual Shuriken.

SKILLS & ABILITIES:

- Flurry
- Martial Artist
- Shrug-it-Off
- Ward
- Killing Blow
- Parry
- Swift

Crew Allowance: 0-6
Independent



Ross Campbell

ESPER

Bullets whizzed by him as Jay ducked back into the room.

"Has he come round?"

Murphy looked up, "Yeah, but he's pretty groggy, we're going to have to haul him out of here."

"Can you get us out?"

"I think so. I can't feel anyone behind them, just the five in the corridor."

Thrusting his gun around the door, Jay randomly sprayed the corridor.

"Make that four. You're better when you don't aim you know."

"Shut up and just do it," he kicked the door shut, sealing the room's only exit.

The door exploded inward in a shower of steel shards, red beams tracking iridescent lines through the smoke-filled room.

"Clear?"

"What?"

"They're gone, sir! No sign of forced exit, it's completely clean!"

Even though it is over seventy-five years since the first documented occurrence of a Craft user in Sao Paulo, Brazil, Espers are still far from becoming accepted members of society and many do nothing to help their own reputation. Discounting scientific explanations for their powers, they prefer far more fanciful accounts of their origins: from deals with supernatural powers to their parents consorting with aliens! Psychologists believe that these fantasies help make up for an Esper's inherent insecurities. It has been noted that those Craft users who have joined the Vatacina have become stable and productive members of society. Espers, however, tend to be wildly unpredictable, flipping from maudlin to maniacal within moments which makes them extremely dangerous and hard to handle. It is believed the Vatacina's strict training regimes and set beliefs give purpose and reason to those gifted with Craft powers, while those who do not believe in their message and strike out on there own, are subject to many physical and mental hardships. Many children from the corporate sectors are either forced to join the Vatacina or abandoned in the outer cities as corporations consider Espers a potential security risk. The corporations are more than happy to use the Vatacina and its resources, but they would not want them living in the same complex.

Many theories exist as to the origins of Craft powers, but none are satisfactory or can be proven conclusively. It does not seem to be passed down genetically from parents, but rather randomly manifests itself. Few actual facts are known, but research has discovered subtle difference within an Esper's DNA, particularly the mitochondrial DNA. This, researchers believe, is also the reason why most Espers do not live past their mid-thirties and commonly suffer from heart problems and motor-neuron disorders later in their lives. In many cases, scans have revealed that their brain hemispheres are not separated and form a single large area, while the pineal gland is always inflamed and enlarged. What is definitely known is that any attempt at brain augmentation, including neural interfaces and brain boxes, removes the user's Craft abilities.

Feared, hated and even idolized by the general public, Espers tend to fluctuate between a deep-seated self-loathing and delusions of godhood. Some have fled into the wastelands and survived, raising themselves to cult-like status and drawing forth the desperate and the dispossessed to worship and serve them. It is rumored that some of these cults have even made it off the Earth, past Mars and onto the colony worlds, although the Commonwealth has officially denied this. Yet family correspondence has mentioned stowaways and raids on some of the established colonies that match the description and MO of Esper cults, now noticeable by their absence of activity on Earth and the outlying systems. Those crews that include Espers give themselves more than just another team member, as an Esper's unique talents can often be the deciding factor between success and failure.

ESPER DATA

Class: Human

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV	CRFT
5	2	2	2	3	3	3

Points: 41 **Armor:** 2

			-1	-2	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

9mm Pistol

Range: 6/14" -2LR **Damage:** 3d6

Combat Knife

Range: Close Combat only **Damage:** 2d6

CRAFT POWERS:

Distract:
"Shhh, I think I heard something over there?"

Target Number: 9

Range: 12"

Special: Telepathic Craft attack. Target model loses its turn for the round.

Ignite:
A ball of iridescent orange shot from the Esper's hand, engulfing the SecuriClone, its arms flailing wildly as it tried to put itself out. I can still smell it - like a grease fire in a cheap steak house.

Target Number: 9

Range: 14" **Damage:** 4d6 (energy)

Special: Critical Fire – on the roll of a 6 during damage the model has caught fire.

A model must roll a 4, 5 or 6 during the control phase to put itself out or it will automatically take 1 point of damage. Models on fire will move randomly during the control phase.

Jaunt:
Caruso and Rog shimmered briefly and then were gone. I saw them appear almost simultaneously in the cover of a ruined house some fifty yards in front of us.

Target Number: 10

Special: Model may move and take up to two models within 2" of user up to a distance of 8" away, ignoring all terrain.

Paranoia:
"Yeah, you. I know what you said and you're gonna pay for it!"

Target Number: 9

Range: 12"

Special: Telepathic Craft attack. If the target model loses the opposed test it must immediately activate and attack the nearest model in its crew in close combat. All the normal close combat rules apply. After the combat has been resolved the turn sequence continues as normal and the model returns to your opponent's control.

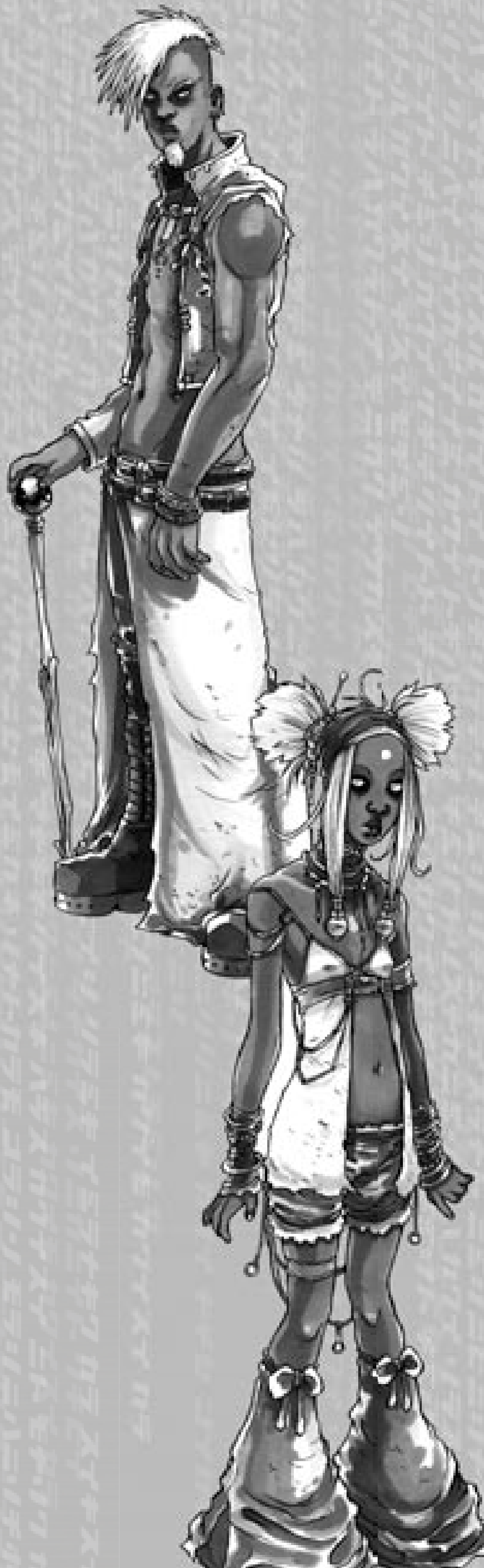
Volcano:
The flames rolled out like waves, engulfing friend and foe alike, while she stood like a goddess, untouched, in the center of it all.

Target Number: 12

Range: Centered on model

Special: 1d6" Blast. Any model except caster within the AOE takes 4d6 damage and automatically catches on fire.

Crew Allowance: 0-3
Independent



Ross Campbell

FIDDLER

"We're in. Now get us out of here."

"One sec."

Jay jumped as two small bots scampered passed him and leapt out of the hatch as it was still closing.

"Strap yourself in, it could get bumpy," Noah throttled back, putting full power into vertical thrust, the plating screaming as the craft shot upwards. He knew she wasn't originally designed for these types of maneuvers, but the modifications he'd made over the years would keep her together… he hoped.

Reaching out through his NI, he touched his bots. Good, they were making their way to the pad; he urged them onwards. The hanger bay doors were already open and he could hear the whine of engines as the pursuit craft rose elegantly upwards.

'Now,' he signaled silently. The bots leapt towards their goal, spindly legs propelling them through the air to land on the engines. Noah cut contact and detonated. Checking his sensors, he was satisfied to see the heat blooms and smiled as secondary explosions ripped through the complex. Having cleared the atmosphere, he unbuckled himself and set a course for the debris fields and the cluster city that was home.

There have always been those with a unique aptitude for machines; those that continually 'fiddle' just to squeeze that extra percentage of performance from an engine or recalibrations that will enhance weapons and other equipment. Technology is prevalent in the 22nd century and although everyone uses it on a daily basis, there is no thought to how it works, or what to do if it stopped working altogether! This is not a problem in the wealthy areas or the corporate enclaves and arcologies, as a defunct model is automatically replaced, but in the outer cities and wastelands it is a very different story. In the favelas most people are using tech that dates back to the 21st century; weapons, transports, even pre-Grid computers, everything ends up in the bustling bazaars and street markets and it is the Fiddler's job to keep them working. However, he is not just a glorified handyman; anyone who has visited a Fiddler's pit will tell you of the weird and wonderful contraptions to be found there, including homebuilt bots, electronic equipment and even weapons - the Fiddlers can make it all. Preferring to stay out of the direct line of combat, the Fiddler sends his tiny metal minions scurrying out to do his bidding, usually causing mayhem and vast amounts of property damage. The Fiddler is often the unsung hero of a crew, never noticed until something is needed or needs repairing. Most Fiddlers prefer it that way as they really just live for their art, much preferring to exist in the company of machines and schematics.

FIDDLER DATA

Class: Human

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV
5	2	2	2	3	3

Points: 31

Armor: 2

			-1	-2	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

The Fiddler has the choice of carrying either a Pulse Gun or a Flamethrower, not both.

Combat Knife

Range: Close Combat only **Damage:** 2d6

EMP Grenades

At first I thought it hadn't worked as there was no flash or mighty explosion - then the bots keeled over.

Range: Thrown (BDY+5") **Damage:** 4d6 P0(3)

Special: 3" Blast template

Only affects robots and does half damage to cyborgs - does NO damage to other models.

Flamethrower

Range: Spray Template **Damage:** 4d6 P1(0)

Special: Fire - any model touched by the template has automatically caught fire and cannot activate until it is extinguished. A model must roll a 4, 5 or 6 during the control phase to put itself out or it will automatically take 1 point of damage. Models on fire will move randomly during the control phase.

Heavy Pistol

Range: 8/18" -2LR **Damage:** 4d6 P1

Pulse Gun

Range: 8/16" -1LR **Damage:** 4d6 P1(2)

Special: Critical Stun – on the roll of a 6 during damage the model is stunned and must roll a 4, 5 or 6 during the control phase to regain consciousness and be able to activate as normal during the round.

Recon Drone

The small Drone buzzed over the complex; in its one pass, it sent back all the information needed to make the assault.

Special: +5 points - may re-arrange set-up on d3 independent models or teams on its crew after all models have been placed. If both players have Recon Drones, roll for priority.

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

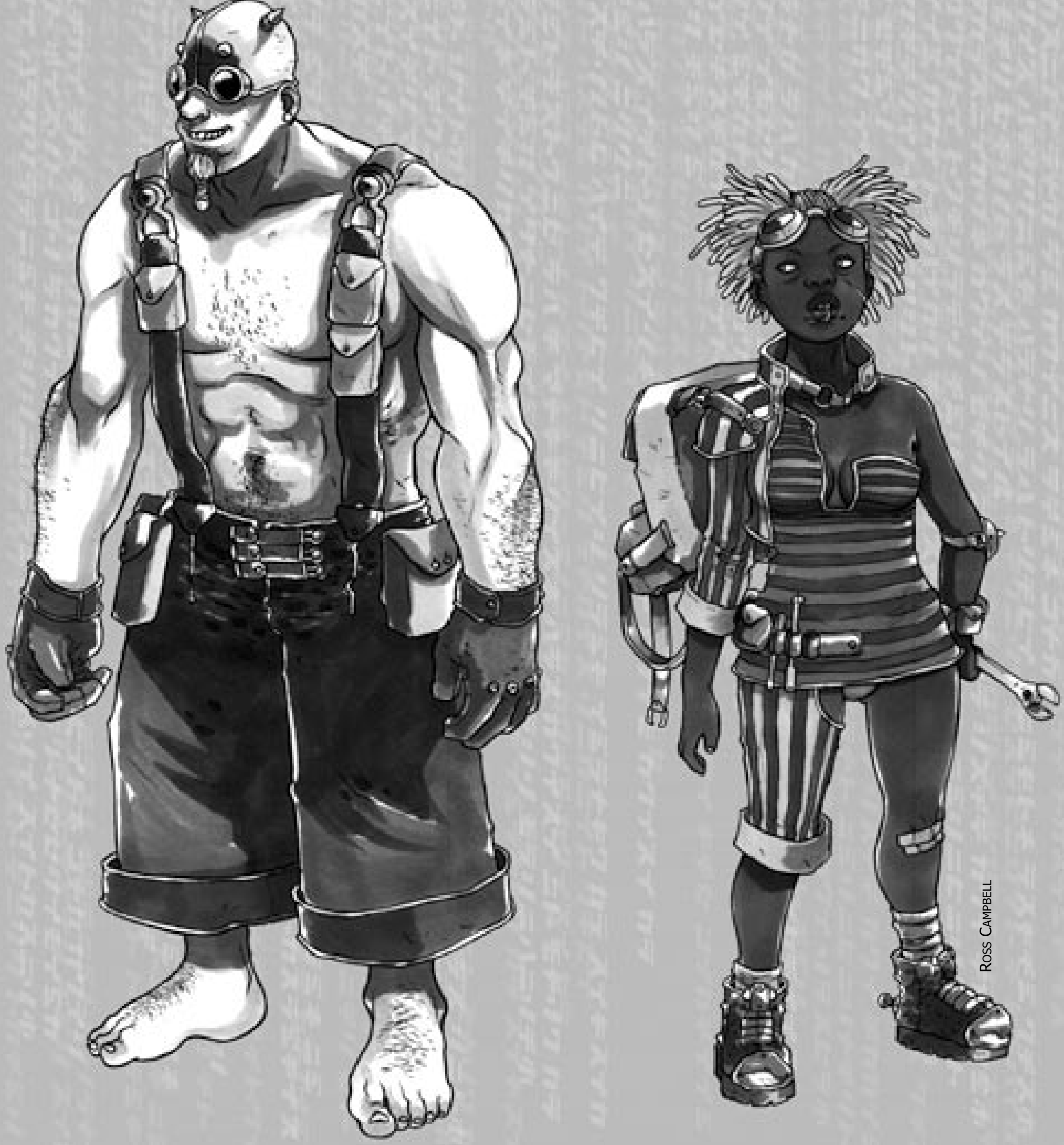
Sentinel Turrets
There's no ways through. They've got Sentinels at the end of each corridor!

Special: May purchase up to 2 Sentinel Turrets

SKILLS & ABILITIES:

- Controller
- Handy

Crew Allowance: 0-3
Independent



Peter Johnston

FIRST STRIKE

The electronic corridors of the Unipol network flashed past Trilec as she navigated her way through the system, trying to find a break in the security protocol surrounding the satellite nav array. The Guardian System traced each break she tried to exploit, and immediately her path was blocked, ICE swarming all around her, forcing a quick retreat back into the network. Six times she had been blocked and with each attempt the resistance had got stronger. Even the new algorithm she had uploaded could not break through, though she had designed it to learn and mutate with each attempt. The Guardian System just seemed to be one step ahead of her all the time. With the last blocked attempt, she had only just managed to escape by uploading herself into the back system controlling the waste disposal units for the Atlanta Monitoring Station. After the security programs had made a sweep of the system, she pulled back, returning to her mortal body.

Trilec's body shuddered and she opened her eyes.

"It's no use Koushun, I can't break through. The security p-col is just too good. Unipol's upgraded their whole system since the Zero incident. It'll take me weeks to worm a way in"

"So we will have to do this the hard way" Koushun smiled, not appearing too disappointed. "OK people, we're going in. Creegan, get the cable launcher set up. We'll go in through the roof pad. Trilec, can you do anything about the vid-cams on the roof?"

"Sure, those are cake, give me five." Trilec closed her eyes and her body convulsed, an empty shell as she returned to the Grid.

Creegan positioned the cable launcher, aiming it across the divide to the roof of the monitoring station. It would be a long slide, but none of the crew were worried - they were Ronin, and they hadn't failed a contract yet.

Trilec returned.

"I've looped the cam feed, the building could collapse and they'd still get a view of an empty roof." She smiled, her previous failure forgotten for the moment.

"Good work. Creegan, fire that baby and let's slide over."

Creegan positioned himself behind the cable launcher, checked the trajectory, and squeezed. The gas-propelled grapple flew out of the launcher with a low whistling sound, a steel cable snaking from behind. The grapple punched through the wall of the stairwell, arms extending to grip the wall and preventing the cable pulling back through.

The crew readied themselves for the slide, each of the five members fixing their cable runners without a word spoken. They were professional and they knew what they had to do.

Koushun went first, gripping his runner as he leapt off the building and glided through the night to the building opposite. Landing softly, his pistols were already in his hands as he touched down, immediately surveying the area for hostiles. Within seconds the rest of the team followed, each landing and fanning out to cover an area of the roof.

There were no hostiles, just the vid-cams moving from side to side, the red glow of their recording lights blinking knowingly at them. Koushun had to trust Trilec's assurance that they could not be seen, but she had never let him down before.

Moving to the door, he motioned Trilec over to bypass the lock; important if they did not want the CSO to know the roof door had been compromised. Trilec worked fast and the door opened. The Ronin slipped inside.

The stairwell was empty, but they still moved with caution. They knew they would meet resistance in the control room, but if they could avoid confrontation before then, they had a better chance of success. Trilec had already determined that their target was on the floor below them. They would have to either find the main elevator shaft and risk climbing down, or move along the main corridor and descend the central stairwell. Each route was risky, but they had no choice. If only the worm had managed to break the data wall surrounding the satellite controls. Trilec mentally kicked herself for a failure that could potentially put the whole team at risk.

The corridor looked empty, but Koushun could not see both ways from his vantage point, so they had to take a chance. Issuing a silent command, Koushun threw open the door and dived through. Rolling forward, he landed on his feet and then crouched down, covering the corridor in front of him, as Jester did the same the other way.

Empty. A stroke of luck perhaps…

Trilec signaled the direction they were to go, deciding the best option being the elevator shaft and the climb down. Keeping flat to the walls, eyes and ears alert for any sound of movement, the crew moved on, Jester bringing up the rear. They had picked the optimum time for the operation, deep into the graveyard shift when the station was staffed by only a few people, most of whom had already been on duty for a number of hours. They reached the elevator and Trilec held her PDR to the panel. Within seconds the door was open and the dark shaft fell away in front of them.

Koushun looked inside and saw the car far below. The ladder that descended the shaft was on the wall to the right of the door, a small ledge leading to it. Signaling his intention, Koushun stepped into the darkness, pressing his body against the wall, and inched his way towards the ladder. Creegan followed with Jester not far behind. Trilec was next. As she stepped out onto the ledge her foot slipped. Arms flailing hopelessly, she felt herself pitch forward into the blackness. As she fell, an arm reached out and pulled her into the ladder with an impact that knocked all the air out of her lungs.

Creegan had managed to grab her as she dropped past him and now they hung facing each other on the ladder.

She silently acknowledged her thanks.

Trilec began her descent, careful not to slip again, and reached the next level where Koushun had already managed to slide the door open.

Suddenly there was a shout from further down the corridor as two CSO troopers rounded the corner. Creegan and Koushun opened fire and the troopers fell to the ground, smoking holes in the middle of their foreheads. Even silenced, the weapons' fire had reverberated down the firmacrete hallway.

"Let's get this done, and fast." Koushun ran down the corridor, eyes scanning repeatedly.

Looking rapidly in both directions at the junction, he turned to the door on the left and he and Jester readied themselves there while Straker kept watch. Creegan stepped forward and, with almost no visible effort, tore the door from its fittings and let the Ronin inside. Koushun dived to the left, Jester to the right; the operators not standing a chance as pinpoint fire relieved them from their duties.

Trilec went straight to the console, immediately hardwiring herself to the system.

Now inside the security wall with nothing blocking her way, she linked up with the satellite controls. She needed to access the control program for UniSat 12 to reposition it so that she could bounce a signal through to the Dravani satellite in orbit nearby. From there it would be a small jump into Dravani International's security system to retrieve the Elysium entrance codes, the real target of their mission.

There were secondary security protocols in the system and she had to avoid them a number of times, but once inside, it would only take a matter of minutes to complete the task and download what they were being paid to retrieve. They had to be quick, the codes were changed every twenty-four hours and they needed to swiftly get the current ones to their client so they could be used.

Back in the real world all hell had broken loose.

A security patrol had come upon Straker and a fierce firefight was in progress. Although he managed to take down three of the five-man patrol, Straker had been seriously wounded. He would play no more part in this or any other mission.

Koushun and Creegan, taking up positions on either side of the corridor, managed to keep the rest of the patrol suppressed while Jester stayed with Trilec's vacant body. He could hear the sound of gunfire intensifying as the original patrol was reinforced. The route back to the elevator was still clear, for the moment, but he knew if it was compromised they would have an almost impossible task to get out.

Trilec's body shuddered and she opened her eyes. "Got them," she whispered as she staggered towards the door.

"Jester, get her out of here, we'll cover you."

Jester ran towards the elevator, dragging Trilec behind. Upon reaching the shaft, she began to climb and Jester followed.

Creegan's arm was bleeding heavily, but he blocked out the pain.

Jester's voice came over the com and Koushun signaled for them to fall back. As they reached the elevator, he signaled for Creegan to climb first.

Creegan turned, but a bullet ripped through his side and he crumpled to the floor, still managing to get a shot off at the trooper that had downed him.

"Go, I'll cover you," Creegan's teeth were clenched in pain.

Koushun took one last look, bowed his head and ascended the ladder. The last he heard from below was the sound of Creegan's voice taunting the troopers before it was lost in a barrage of multiple weapons' fire.

Upon reaching the floor above, he raced towards the stairwell leading up to the roof. Jester looked past him to look for Creegan, but Koushun's face told him all he needed to know.

They reached the roof with the sound of pursuit closing behind them. Grabbing the cable, they attached and activated the runners, small rockets that propelled them back up the line to the building where they had started.

Landing safely on the roof, Koushun could see they were not alone.

Out of the shadows stepped the enforcer he had met yesterday evening, flanked by two TADS.

"I take it that you have been successful? We do not pay credits for failure."

"Trilec, give him the codes."

Pulling a small disc from her board, she handed it to the enforcer. Inserting it into his PDR, he quickly scanned the files before handing it over to the TADS, who immediately lifted off and glided away into the night sky.

"I'm impressed, Koushun, although I see this mission was not without its cost." The enforcer observed the three remaining crew and passed Koushun the PDR, pointing to the screen

"The funds have been transferred to the desired accounts as agreed." He looked around. "You should make yourself scarce. I think your handiwork tonight has not gone unnoticed."

Koushun glanced towards the Unipol building where two Barracudas were rolling out onto the launch pad. He turned back to the enforcer, but he was gone, back into the shadows, disappearing as anonymously as he had arrived.

"We're done. Lets go"

Koushun and the two remaining Ronin melted away into the darkness.

Peter Johnston

CENTRAL SECURITY ORGANIZATION

The Central Security Organization has acted as a military peace-keeping force and the public face of law enforcement in a civilization that for many years has been torn apart by war. A division of Unipol, their mandate is to maintain peace and fight crime in a world where crime is rampant, where gangs rule the outer cities, and corporate crime is the single largest criminal statistic, costing corporations billions in funds, and the lives of many operatives on both sides of the law. To really understand Unipol and the CSO, we need to look back in history, primarily back to the early 20th century, to examine previous attempts to maintain global peace and stability.

Throughout history, mankind has suffered from conflict with his fellow man. Yet once the smoke of battle has subsided, there inevitably emerges a peace initiative between the major combatants in an attempt to avoid future conflict. This has not had an encouraging degree of success. In 1899, one such conference was held at The Hague from which resulted the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes and the establishment of the Permanent Court of Arbitration. 15 years later, however, the world was torn apart as the First World War began. At the end of this "War to end all Wars," out of man's desire for peace, the League of Nations was born. Established in 1919 under the Treaty of Versailles ("to promote international cooperation and to achieve peace and security") the League was doomed to failure as the interests of each member state conflicted with the overall goals. The League of Nations ceased all activities when it failed to prevent the Second World War.

During this time, the world had never seen global conflict on so many fronts. All continents were affected, with governments forming alliances to attack a common enemy. After the world had finished being torn apart and as the conflict drew to a close, representatives from numerous countries including China, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States drew up a charter that in 1945 became the basis for the United Nations. As with its predecessors, the United Nations was founded on a noble cause, aiming for a world where mankind practiced tolerance and could live together in peace. It maintained a powerful presence throughout the latter part of the 20th century, providing peacekeeping forces to various areas of the world in an attempt to maintain global stability. However, there was not always unity amongst its members and over time deep divisions became obvious. As countries began to pursue conflicts without the support of UN resolutions, going against the fundamental premise that had been so important to its original mandate, its power base started to crumble.

As the new millennium continued, and more and more countries were drawn into conflict, the war on terror escalated and the UN struggled to maintain any semblance of international unity or control. Religious differences rapidly became the major issue in world conflicts, not just between governments and terrorist groups, but nation against nation. UN commanders in the field found it hard enough to maintain the peace in their own ranks, far less

Peter Johnston

to keep the peace in the areas where they were deployed. As the Religious Wars exploded around the world, the UN Security Council struggled to survive as more and more countries withdrew their membership. By 2045 it was not just the UN who struggled to survive, as anarchy had governments around the world fighting to maintain control. The UN found itself powerless to have any affect in such an environment of international conflict and public dissent.

Finally, the Religious Wars did come to an end and hostilities ceased. Due to the conflict, however, the corporations had grown in power and influence, and those remaining independent governments found themselves in the unenviable position of corporate stooges. In a last attempt to regain their autonomy, the UN Security Council issued an assignment to their stationed forces, now the world's only remaining official standing army. What followed next is known as the Mexico City Stand-Off. In February 2052, a UN assault team raided a Xenone testing facility in Mexico City in the belief they were carrying out illegal weapons' research. For once the corporations stood together, even though it was a hollow alliance, because an attack on one of them meant they all could be in danger in the future. This league of corporations immediately took action against those they held responsible for this infringement of corporate rights and responded in force. There was little the world's governments could do against their combined might and if it had not been for one general in an old Alabama missile facility, the look of the world could have been very different today. General Francis Hammond had command of one of the only missile silos that had not been integrated into, what was then, the corporate-controlled worldwide computer network. Although the missiles were old and nobody knew if they would actually fly, his threat of a nuclear attack on behalf of the Americas was still not one to be taken lightly and was enough to bring all parties together.

Soon after this a peace conference was held in Heiwa, Japan, and a new balance of power began to emerge. The old governments that had united to form the original UN were gone and those that had taken their place were in no shape to stand against the strength of a united corporate world. The corporations agreed to relinquish economic power back to the relevant governments and withdraw all their forces, but in return they required some of the world's remaining official organizations, in particular the UN and Interpol, to be disbanded. They wanted a new global organization to be created where national and corporate representatives would be involved in its mandates and actions.

The new organization created under the Heiwa Accord was named Unipol.

JAIME JONES

A joint Board was created to discuss and approve the operation of the organization and its various divisions and personnel; one of its first decisions was the formation of the Central Security Organization, a division that became known as the CSO.

It stated in the Heiwa Accord that government-run military organizations were outlawed, world security relying on a Unipol-controlled law enforcement agency. However, the corporations had insisted that for their own protection this was not enough and so a clause was written into the Accord that permitted them to have their own private security forces. Although world leaders would have preferred to deny this, at the time their main concern was to retain what little power they had. This essentially allowed the corporations to build and train their own private armies and this one small clause ensured that their power would continue to grow

In the months following the signing of the Accord, the working structure of the CSO was organized. To enable them to police the largest area possible, the Earth was split into precincts. Each precinct was assigned a Chief with units and operatives directly assigned to that precinct along with numerous administration staff. Due to the size of the precincts, it was also necessary for the CSO to have regional stations to deal with local investigations and incidents. The CSO are allowed to police the corporate zones and arcologies, but they are often shut out of investigations by the private security forces that administer these sectors. They do complain about this and other hindrances to their effectiveness in the corporate areas, but the Board almost always sides with the corporations, suggesting the investigating officers should be thankful for this assistance as CSO personnel always complain they are understaffed.

A large number of CSO and Unipol personnel are stationed aboard massive aerial carriers that are even capable of short-range spaceflight in the event of emergencies arising in Serenity City. These Arks, each one almost a mile long, generally travel in low orbit with support crew, four divisions of CSO operational personnel and squadrons of support vehicles, including the Barracuda patrol cruisers. Most stationed troopers spend their life aboard the Arks, awaiting the call for deployment. The Arks exist in isolation, small cities in their own right and able to stay in flight and operational for years. Only a few times in the history of the CSO has the full power and armament of an Ark been brought to bear on an incident, dropping out of the sky and landing its full complement of troops directly into a trouble spot. Often the threat of an Ark circling above an area is enough to quell subversive activity.

As with all law enforcement agencies throughout history, the CSO has been blamed for not dealing with certain incidents and criticized for pursuing others and, also, the CSO and Unipol's authority has often been challenged in various parts of the world. For example, the Nile Empire has always refused to recognize the CSO's authority, citing Unipol's failure to deal with the Pale Horse crisis that devastated the African continent; so far, the Empire has never contributed to Unipol.

Over the years, the jurisdiction of the CSO has spread to the off-world colonies. It has a presence on Mars, albeit a small one, as the Commonwealth, who controls the majority of settlements, does not fully recognize the authority of the CSO, although they tolerate their presence. When the Rock penal colony was originally developed, the CSO sent a detachment of troops to maintain security, but after the Unipol Correction Institution handed administrational control over to Incare, the CSO was asked to "remove its presence."

Despite the many obstacles in their path, however, the CSO continues to stand by its belief of "law above all."

Peter Johnston

MARSHAL

Marshal Langstrom felt the bullet rip through the flesh of his thigh as he tried to spin away from the Ronin in front of him. Clenching his teeth against the pain, he hit the floor as a second bullet tore through his arm, sending blood spattering across the wall. In one fluid motion he turned onto his back and, sighting the Ronin along the barrel of his Hammerhead, fired two quick bursts.

Silence, then a crunch, as the Ronin crumpled to the floor minus his head.

Langstrom rolled onto his knees, his eyes watering as pain shot through his leg. All around him the CSO troopers stood in stunned silence as Langstrom pushed himself up onto his feet; he stumbled and reached out to the wall for support. A Sergeant held out an arm, but Langstrom dismissed it as he undid his belt and tied it around his leg. Pulling it tight, he almost blacked out, but managed to stay conscious. "Don't show the pain. Don't show the pain" kept repeating itself in his head.

Drawing his breath, he straightened up.

"So what are you all staring at? Let's go, we have a job to do."

The Marshals are the most feared and respected officers in the CSO and the sight of one can make even the innocent tremble. A Marshal 'always gets his mark' no matter what the odds! Operating in some of the most dangerous trouble spots throughout the world as well as the off-world colonies, when necessary they dispense justice at the end of a gun. They are highly trained, fully capable of operating alone or, if the need arises, leading a unit into hostile territory. They are always prepared to take risks and will certainly go 'above and beyond' the call of duty, sometimes overstepping the boundaries of the law if it means a successful operation.

Recruited exclusively from the ranks, their training is the most rigorous and demanding, undertaken in the most hostile of environments. Candidates are often noticed early on in their career with the CSO and are pulled out of their current deployment to begin training in facilities throughout the world. Unlike most other CSO personnel, Marshals are not assigned directly to any specific location, but operate autonomously, moving wherever an investigation takes them and, as such, there are no boundaries to their jurisdiction. They have the authority to execute criminals on the spot and will, if necessary, take this option. For months at a time a Marshal could be out in the field; working alone, living from day to day, tracking criminals from city to city or even out into the colonies - nowhere is safe from a Marshal's pursuit. There are even rumors that some Marshals have found their way onto sleeper ships and out to the outer colonies, whether in pursuit of targets or just to keep an eye on things is not known.

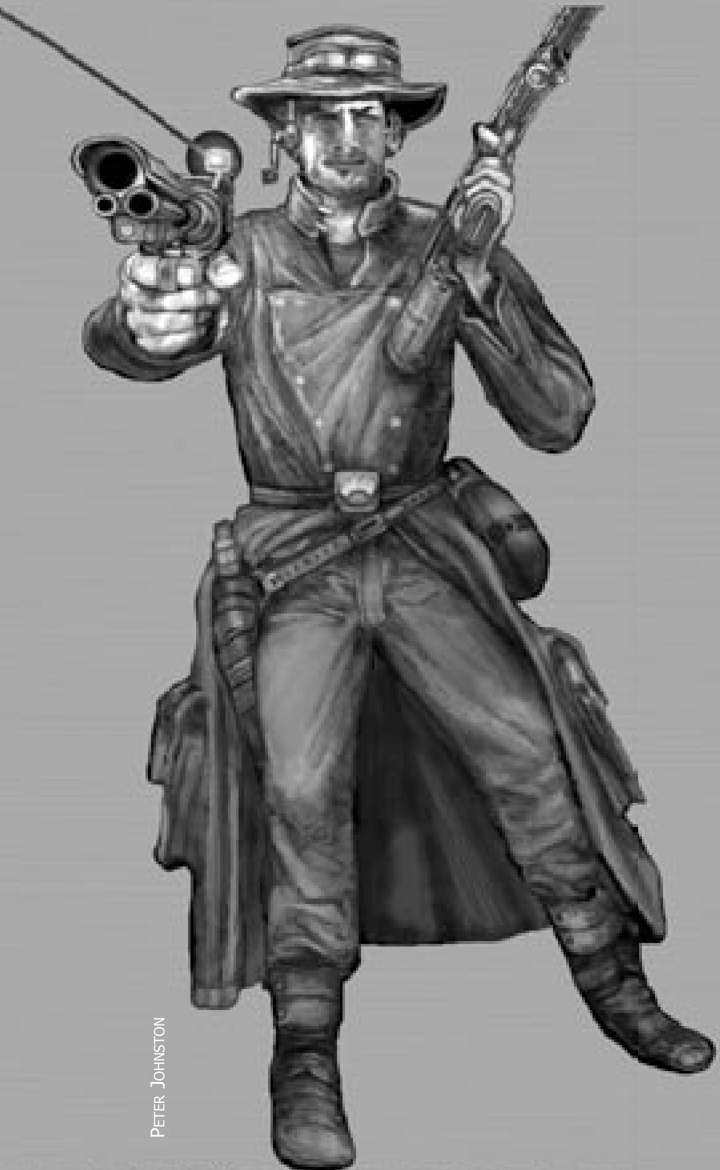
The life of a Marshal is a lonely one, always on duty, often operating alone and following a trail to wherever it may lead. There is also no room for doubt in a Marshal's existence; he does what needs to be done so that others may rest easier at night. Even though they operate autonomously, an investigation may reach the point where they need support, so they have the choice to raise a posse or call on CSO troops. If there is one in the vicinity, the Marshal will usually call upon the nearest Ark for the required personnel. They will often return to an Ark after a successful assignment, usually to rest, heal and restock equipment for their next period of activity in the field, but they prefer being the outsider and do not have time for the rules of a structured environment. Many times a Marshal will bypass the proper Unipol channels and codes to get the job done, much to the annoyance of the Board, but even they cannot argue with results. However, the Marshal rarely stays around to argue procedures with them or to even bother filing the required reports.

During training, some find that the life of a roving Marshal is not for them, preferring the stability of being assigned to a precinct and receiving the title of Adjudicator. They will continue to uphold the law and have all the skills of their Marshal training to call on, but their domain is only within their assigned jurisdiction although, if necessary, they can still follow an investigation out of their precinct.

Over the years there have been Marshals whose exploits have reached fever-pitch amongst the public once their story has been exposed by the media. Three of the most famous Marshals were brothers - Scott, Mike and Dirk Brand. Dirk, following a lead to bring down a notorious arms and narcotics dealer, arrived in the town of Humboldt on Mars. Too far out from major settlements to enjoy the protection of the Commonwealth, the locals gangs ruled the area, but they all paid homage to Parken Stool, the man Dirk was hunting. Knowing this was a going to be tough one and he would need help getting to his target, Dirk called in his two brothers. On October 26th 2168, Scott, Mike and Dirk along with Brent Mitchell, the Ranger assigned to get close to Stool, made their move against him and his lieutenants.

Within minutes the fight was over, Hammerheads dispensing swift justice. Scott, Mike and Brent had all been injured, but Dirk remained unscathed. Of Stool's men, five of his closest lieutenants lay dead alongside many of their 'soldiers', but Parken Stool himself had fled the scene without firing a round. Dirk followed his trail into the wilderness, but unknown to him, Stool returned to Humboldt and gunned down Scott and Mike as they lay sleeping. Fortunately, Mitchell had been taking the night air and it was he who put an end to Stool as he tried to flee the scene. Days later Dirk returned to learn of his brothers' fate; his resignation from the CSO was received at the Mars' office some days later.

A decision to go against a Marshal is not a decision that should be taken lightly as many have discovered and it is a mistake only made once.



MARSHAL DATA

Class: Human

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV	REP
5	4	3	3	3	5	2

Points: 67

Armor: 2

			-1	-1	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

Combat Knife

Range: Close Combat only **Damage:** 2d6

Grenades

Range: Thrown (BDY+5”) **Damage:** 4d6

Special: 3” Blast template

Hammerhead Assault Pistol

The noise was incredible, I wondered about its use on covert assignments and then I saw the scattered remains of our opponents and realized the issue of a silencer on his weapon was a mute point - not unless we had someone with a bucket and mop following us in!

Range: 10/18" **Damage:** 5d6 P1

Special: Can be used for suppressing fire at short range

SKILLS & ABILITIES:

- Leadership
- Run 'n' Gun
- Snap Shot
- Legendary
- Shrug-it-Off

Crew Allowance: 0-5
Independent

TROOPERS

One of the first things they teach in boot camp is to know your team as your life will often depend on their actions and trusting them is as essential as the weapon at your side. The teams of Troopers that make up the majority of active personnel within the CSO are closer than families, dependent on each other to get them through assignments alive. Drawn mainly from the outer cities and favelas, most believe the CSO is a calling, although in the beginning it is just seen as regular meals and a way off the streets. Yet the CSO can become more than just an escape from their past, for here they find camaraderie and a sense of accomplishment as they learn new skills or put old ones to a better use. Stationed in large numbers on the Arks as well as units at each precinct, they perform the everyday tasks of law enforcement, from crowd or traffic control, to enforcing controls in border disputes or protecting citizens in gang wars. They have a hard job for, since the abolition of the government-run military organizations, the CSO have to walk a fine line between being a police force and a military force. The Troopers act as both which results in the great amount of resistance they encounter out on the streets - it is difficult to protect citizens when you are protecting them from other citizens and thus the thin blue line is often blurred.

It is their background and understanding of life on the other side of the wall that makes the Troopers different; maybe they are more empathic with those in the gutter struggling for survival than with those who sacrifice millions while sipping champagne in their penthouse. The Trooper is the most commonly recognized element of the CSO in action, seen patrolling the streets or the first to arrive at a crime scene, but few civilians ever see them for what they really are - the backbone of the CSO. At the time that they start basic training, they are placed into ten-man teams, with each team assigned a Sergeant who will help guide and train them into the efficient, disciplined soldiers they need to become. Each Ark contains over a 100,000 active duty personnel divided into four divisions. It is very rare that a whole division will need to be deployed, as in most disturbances a battalion is more than enough to quell whatever trouble may have arisen. The Arks tend mainly to send back-up troops to the woefully undermanned precincts at the platoon or team level to help support local operations.

All CSO Troopers are trained as self-sufficient teams, able to survive on the ground after a drop when supplies and reenforcements could be days away. More than any others, it is the selfless actions of these men and women that help the CSO to hold back the floodgates of anarchy. Whether it is crowd control or a full-on assault, the CSO Troopers will always be at the front of the action.

TROOPER SERGEANT DATA

Class: Human

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV
5	3	2	2	3	3

Points: 28 **Armor:** 1

			-1	-2	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

9mm Pistol

Range:	6/14" -2LR	**Damage:**	3d6

Assault Rifle

Range:	10/22" -1LR	**Damage:**	5d6 P1
Special:	Can be used for suppressing fire at short range.		

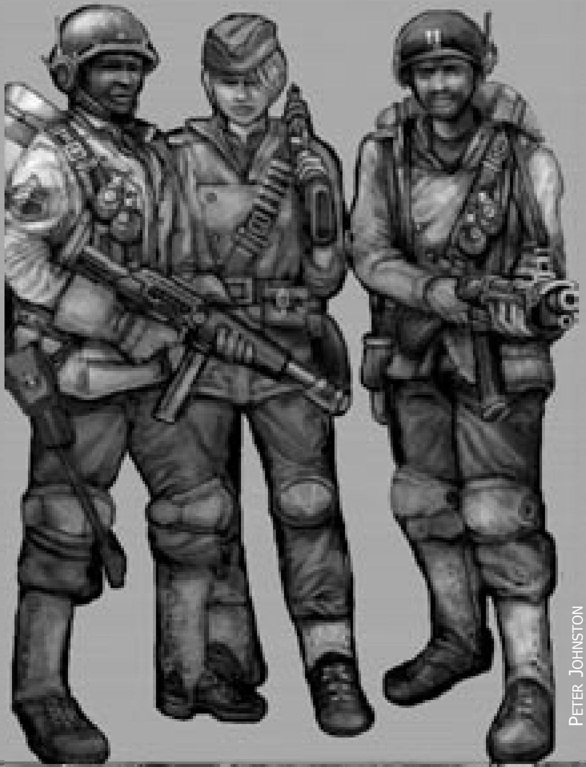
Combat Knife

Range:	Close Combat only	**Damage:**	2d6

SKILLS & ABILITIES:

- Leadership

Crew Allowance: 1 per CSO Trooper Team
CSO Trooper team attachment



Peter Johnston

TROOPER DATA

Class: Human

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV
5	2	1	2	3	2

Points: 25 **Armor:** 1

		-1	-2	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

9mm Pistol

Range: 6/14" -2LR **Damage:** 3d6

Assault Rifle

Range: 10/22" -1LR **Damage:** 5d6 P1

Special: Can be used for suppressing fire at short range.

Combat Knife

Range: Close Combat only **Damage:** 2d6

Smoke Grenades

Range: Thrown (BDY+5”) **Damage:** None

Special: Smoke Grenade template. Blocks line of sight.

Roll 1d6 each control phase smoke stays in play to see what happens to the template; 1-3 remove template; 4-5 template stays in play; 6 moves randomly.

Crew Allowance: 0+
Team Allowance: 4-10

SPECIAL WEAPONS TROOPER DATA

Class: Human

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV
5	2	1	2	3	2

Points: 25 **Armor:** 1

		-1	-2	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

The CSO Special Weapons Trooper has the choice of carrying either a Combat Shotgun or a Flamethrower, not both.

9mm Pistol

Range: 6/14" -2LR **Damage:** 3d6

Combat Knife

Range: Close Combat only **Damage:** 2d6

Combat Shotgun

Range: 2/4/8” **Damage:** 8d6/6d6/4d6

Special: Spray template

Flamethrower

Range: Spray Template **Damage:** 4d6 P1(0)

Special: Fire - any model touched by the template has automatically caught fire and cannot activate until it is extinguished. A model must roll a 4, 5 or 6 during the control phase to put itself out or it will automatically take 1 point of damage. Models on fire will move randomly during the control phase.

Crew Allowance: Up to 2 per Trooper Team
Special weapons officers can only be added to a Trooper team if a Sergeant is also attached.
CSO Trooper team attachment

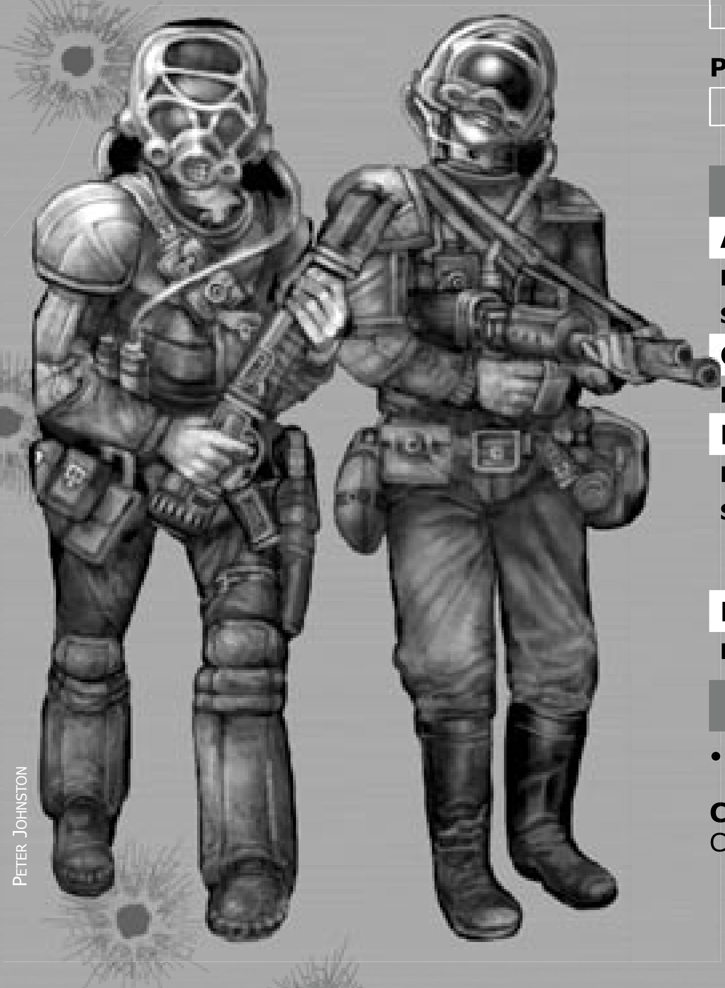
PEACE KEEPERS

If the Troopers are the backbone of the CSO, then it is the Peace Keepers that are its muscle. When a job calls for maximum force with surgical precision, the Peace Keepers will be at its core. Recruited from the ranks of veteran troopers, Peace Keepers are selected for their unrivalled bravery and an aptitude for the skills needed for special operations.

Trained to operate in any environment, Peace Keepers are as effective in the jungles of Borneo as they are in Zero-G. The CSO try to maintain a standing force of one team per platoon stationed on the Arks, but due to the hazardous assignments issued to the Peace Keepers, this is not always possible.

Those assigned to the Peace Keepers have little time for fraternization, for if they are not on assignment, they are on training missions. For a Peace Keeper it never stops and they must be continually at the top of their game; they are rigorously trained and retrained, for if one of the team cannot keep up, he has to be dropped. They must always be able to operate at maximum efficiency and one weak link is all it takes to put both the team and the assignment in jeopardy, neither being a viable option. Their training is extensive in both combat techniques and weaponry, but there is far more to them than just brute force as the Peace Keepers are trained, above everything, to outthink their opponents.

The Peace Keepers' reputation as the bad boys of the CSO is due to their rare off-duty activities and is well earned, but most infractions are usually overlooked as a natural blowing-off of steam due to their highly hazardous deployments. No officer would dispute that having a Peace Keeper team on hand will almost always guarantee success.



PETER JOHNSTON

PEACE KEEPER MAJOR DATA

Class: Human

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV
5	4	3	3	3	4

Points: 43 **Armor:** 2

			-1	-2	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

Assault Rifle

Range: 10/22" -1LR **Damage:** 5d6 P1

Special: Can be used for suppressing fire at short range.

Combat Knife

Range: Close Combat only **Damage:** 2d6

EMP Grenade

Range: Thrown (BDY+5”) **Damage:** 4d6 P0(3)

Special: 3” Blast template

Only effects robots and does half damage to cyborgs - does NO damage to other models.

Heavy Pistol

Range: 8/18” -2LR **Damage:** 4d6 P1

SKILLS & ABILITIES:

- Leadership
- Keen Eye

Crew Allowance: 1 per CSO Trooper Team
CSO Trooper team attachment

PEACE KEEPERS DATA

Class: Human

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV
5	3	3	3	3	3

Points: 39 **Armor:** 2

			-1	-2	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

Assault Rifle

Range: 10/22" -1LR **Damage:** 5d6 P1

Special: Can be used for suppressing fire at short range.

Combat Knife

Range: Close Combat only **Damage:** 2d6

Grenades

Range: Thrown (BDY+5”) **Damage:** 4d6

Special: 3” Blast template

Heavy Pistol

Range: 8/18" -2LR **Damage:** 4d6 P1

SKILLS & ABILITIES:

- Keen Eye

Crew Allowance: 0-4
Team Allowance: 4-10

PEACE KEEPER SNIPER DATA

Class: Human

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV
4	3	3	3	3	3

Points: 49 **Armor:** 2

			-1	-2	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

Combat Knife

Range: Close Combat only **Damage:** 2d6

Heavy Pistol

Range: 8/18" -2LR **Damage:** 4d6 P1

Sniper Rifle

Range: 6-20/42" -1LR **Damage:** 5d6 P2

Special: Move or Fire - model may not move and fire this weapon during its turn.

Suppression - target model must always take a morale roll for suppression after being fired at by a Sniper Rifle.

SKILLS & ABILITIES:

- Marksman
- Scout

Crew Allowance: 0-1 per Peace Keeper Team
Sniper can only be purchased if a Major is attached to the team.
Independent.

RANGERS

Not all assignments for the CSO need the strength of arms and open investigation, as there is much that is hidden by corporate and governmental stonewalling, not to mention misdirection from within Unipol itself. To counter this, a program was created by the Marshals to investigate those who think themselves immune from the law. Funds were redirected and re-appropriated; a promising career would suddenly end in an unexpected resignation and within a few weeks no record of that existence was to be found – and so the Ranger program was born. These deep-cover operatives are known only by their call signs and will rarely meet any other CSO operatives apart from the Marshal that requested and assigned them. Dealing almost exclusively in political and corporate misdeeds, the Ranger is often the only means to expose those that flaunt the law. A Ranger has to have complete trust and confidence in the Marshal they report to, as well as bravery that goes beyond anything needed by those that face combat in the field – any failures are nearly always fatal. A Ranger's exploits will never become public knowledge and if they die there is no one to mourn them and none to notice their passing apart from an elite group of Marshals. They are trained to carry out their assigned work and, if they survive, they melt back into daily life until called upon for their next assignment.

A Ranger exposed and with his cover blown, is as good as buried unless they can be extracted immediately. Even the Unipol Board is kept unaware of the details of the program and would probably remain completely ignorant if it was not for the occasional need for a Ranger to come back to an Ark. A Marshal will go out of his way to cover up any trace of Ranger activity and deny any existence of the program, implicating informants as the sources of information on potential criminal activity. At any one time, a Marshal could have responsibility for a number of deployed Rangers who will only report directly to him and are not even aware of the others' existence. Communications are always extreme cloak and dagger operations, with most Rangers preferring live meets in public places as they are only too aware that should a ghost get hold of a transmission detailing their assignment, their life would be compromised.

Rangers are not always made active as soon as they are deployed; there are many sleeper agents going about their daily life, perhaps for years, before being called upon. No single person knows how many Rangers are out in the field at any one time or what their assignments are. These selfless individuals give up their lives to protect the common citizen and believe unwaveringly in the power of the law to which they dedicate themselves.

RANGERS DATA

Class: Human

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV	HACK
6	3	2	3	3	4	1

Points: 41 **Armor:** 1

			-1	-2	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

The Ranger has the choice of carrying either a Beam Pistol or a Flechete Pistol, not both.

Beam Pistol

A thin beam of energy lanced out, leaving a tiny perfect smoking hole exactly where the heart should be; a look of puzzlement crossed his face as he took a faltering step forward and then collapsed dead onto the walkway.

Range: 6" **Damage:** 5d6 P1

Special: Critical Fire – on the roll of a 6 during damage the model has caught fire.

Flechete Pistol

Range: 8/14" -1LR **Damage:** 3d6

Special: Choose one of the three ammo types available before making each ranged attack and apply the effects if the model is damaged.

1. Poison: Make a d6 check each control phase for poison. 1-3 model automatically takes 1 damage; 4-6 model has shrugged off the poison and it has no further effect.

2. Fearidon: Model immediately becomes panicked and flees.

3. Inhibitor: Stops models with CRFT powers from using their abilities for d3 rounds.

Garotte

The mono-filament wire sliced easily through flesh and bone; he stepped back to avoid the arterial spray and caught the accusing eyes of the guard looking up at him from the floor as his body, still standing, swayed before crumpling next to his head.

Range: Close Combat only **Damage:** 3d6

Special: Damage 6d6 against human-class models on a successful back strike.

Smoke Grenades

Range: Thrown (BDY+5") **Damage:** None

Special: Smoke Grenade template blocks line of sight.

Roll 1d6 each control phase smoke stays in play to see what happens to the template; 1-3 remove template; 4-5 template stays in play; 6 moves randomly.

SKILLS & ABILITIES:

- Infiltrate
- Second Glance

Crew Allowance: 0-4
Independent

Peter Johnston

'STOMPER' CLASS 3 WARBOT

"What the hell were those things?"

"What, is irrelevant."

"Irrelevant - they just waxed half our team, dabo!"

"Your tactical assessment was flawed."

"YOU TWO, knock it off. AJ, do you think you can hold them"

"I don't have to think. What is meat compared to metal."

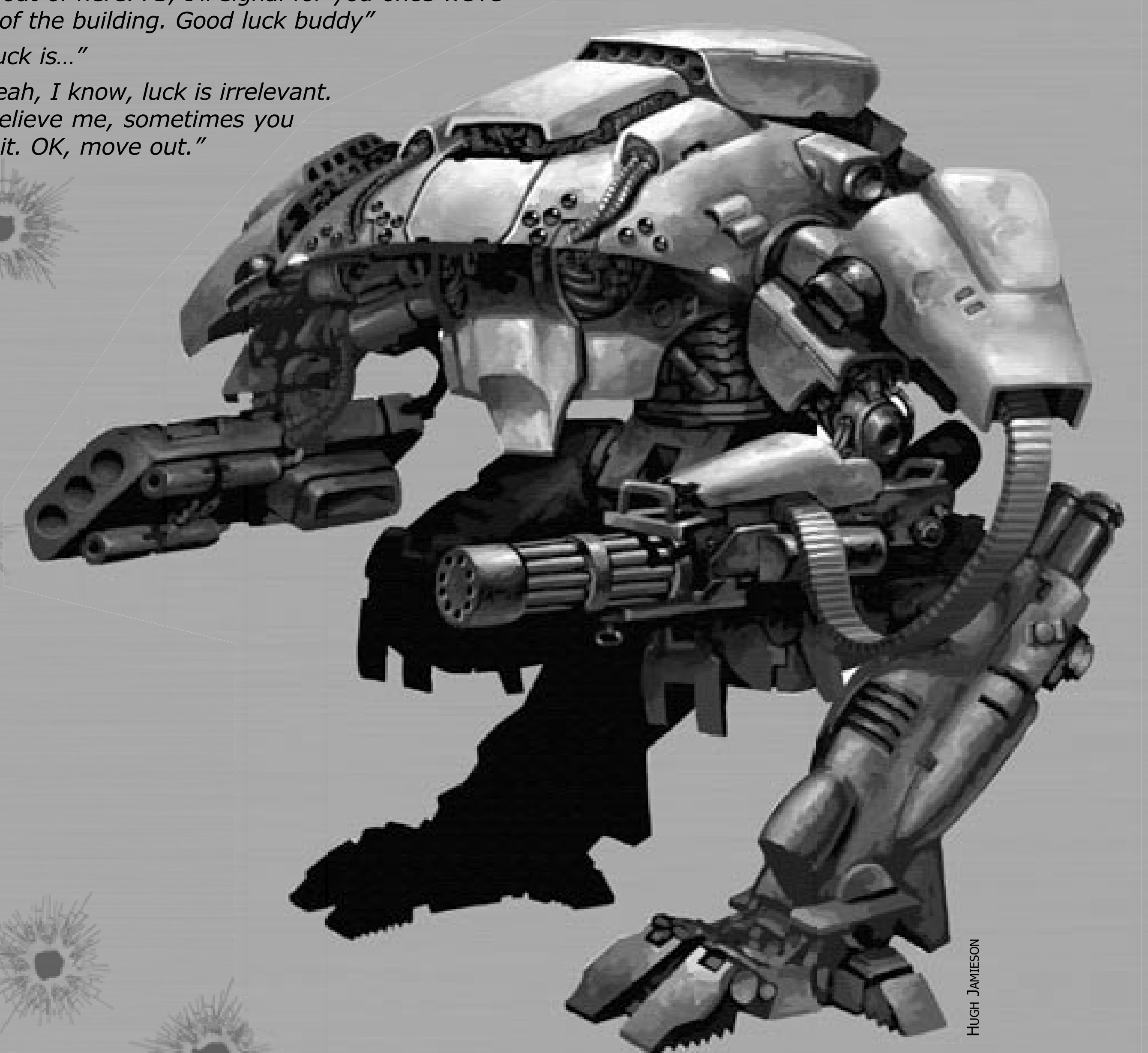
"Great. I'll take that as a yes, shall I? The rest of you losers saddle up and get ready to haul your butts out of here. AJ, I'll signal for you once we're clear of the building. Good luck buddy"

"Luck is…"

"Yeah, I know, luck is irrelevant. But believe me, sometimes you need it. OK, move out."

The Class 3 Warbot, affectionately known as the 'Stomper' began service in 2145 as a general-purpose security bot in corporate compounds on and off-world. The CSO did not support the need for such a heavily armored security guard, but the corporations countered that they needed to protect themselves with the increase in sabotage and theft from their facilities. Unless the CSO wished to provide the additional security details needed, the Class 3 would continue operations. There was no way the CSO could have provided the additional manpower necessary, even if they had wanted to, and the corporations knew it.

Although devastating in confrontations and perfect at holding a given point, the Stomper was not adept at pursuing or tracking enemy operatives as it was just too slow. But a new solution to corporate security problems was already being presented - the SecuriClone, and within a few short years they would replace over 70% of



HUGH JAMIESON

security bots. Many Stompers suddenly found themselves obsolete, discharged and abandoned, their armaments removed and any sensitive information scrubbed from their memory banks. The junkyards became home to many - rusting metal monoliths, slowly shuffling back and forth, desperately attempting to keep their systems performing before the elements and lack of maintenance took their toll.

A group of senior CSO engineers now saw a way to help their manpower issue. Tracking many of the discarded Warbots, working or not, they brought them aboard the Arks and began total overhauls, including removing the limiters from their CPU so that they could develop. Although the corporations preferred blind drones who only obeyed orders, the CSO were aware of the strength of the free-thinking individual. Once fully operational and aware, they were given a choice like any other citizen - rejoin the populace or stay and serve in the CSO. To the legions of Stompers this was no choice, the CSO had already been more of a ‘parent’ to them than anything else and they knew that they would no longer have even existed if it had not been for their actions. Not one refused the offer of service. Dispensing with their numerical designation assigned at manufacture, they took more friendly names for themselves to help them fit in with their crewmates.

Warbots have been found to be especially effective when used off-world or in dangerous environments and their ability to survive and operate in a vacuum or toxic atmosphere has been invaluable to the CSO. A number of Stompers are permanently deployed on Mars where their skills and abilities are perfectly matched for helping protect key installations. They are unaffected by the thin atmosphere and all but the most extreme weather conditions to be found there. There usefulness is highly valued in CSO operations and this has given the Stompers a true sense of purpose; in some cases their fledgling personalities have even begun showing arrogance, although this is always kept in check in the presence of superior officers.

The sheer firepower of a single Warbot is often enough to provide covering fire for an entire assault team; not many enemies will keep their heads up when faced with something of that ferocity, allowing the other members of the crew to storm the objective. It is not only the firepower of the Warbot that is effective; its heavy armor is often used to shield advancing troops, keeping them safe from harm as the Stomper marches on an objective. The Stomper is designed to take an incredible amount of punishment and even if severely damaged and un-operational on the field, it is unusual that a Warbot’s central CPU will be affected. It is heavily shielded and, even when the outer body is all but destroyed, can function for days without any damage to the Stomper’s personality or memory core. Once back on an Arc, an engineer can soon fix them up and get them back on the deck and ready for their next assignment.

‘STOMPER’ CLASS 3 WARBOT DATA

Class: Robot

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV
6	3	2	1	5	5

Points: 117 **Armor:** 3

						-1	-2	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

Mini-Gun

Range: 10/20" -2LR **Damage:** 8d6/5d6

Special: Automatic

Model receives additional damage dice on the damage rolls of a 5 or 6, instead of just the usual 6.

Pulse Cannon

A blast of electrical energy exploded outwards incapacitating man and machine.

Range: 8/20" -2LR **Damage:** 4d6 P1(2)

Special: 3” Blast template

Critical Stun – on the roll of a 6 during damage the model is stunned and must roll a 4, 5 or 6 during the control phase to regain consciousness and be able to activate as normal during the round.

SKILLS & ABILITIES:

- Built for Battle
- Weapons Platform
- Ponderous

Crew Allowance: 0-4

1 allowed per 1 Peace Keeper or 2 CSO Trooper teams in crew.

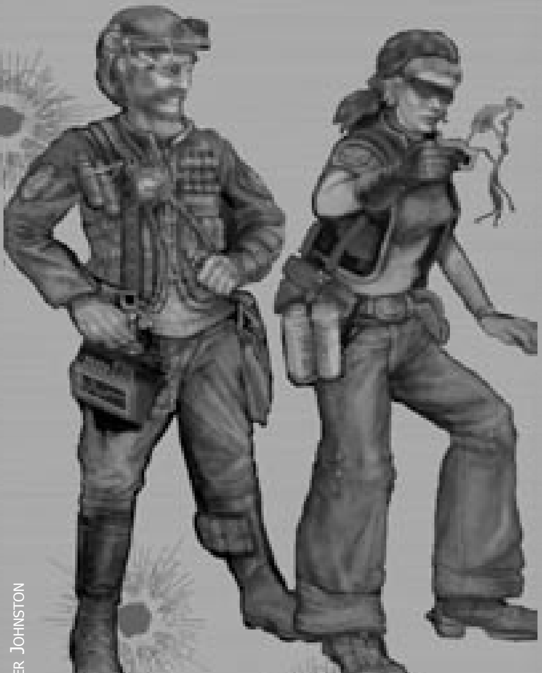
Independent

FIELD ENGINEER

One of the key elements in CSO operations are the Field Engineers. Trained in everything from repairing weapons to hacking systems, their role should not be underplayed. Field Engineers are drawn from the multitude of technical staff that keeps the CSO at operational efficiency. The Unipol technical staff are second to none and are usually versatile in many different fields; it is those that show the most versatility that are assigned to become Field Engineers. Their training is intense as their survival during a mission can often be the deciding factor between success and failure and so a Field Engineer is more than able to hold his own with any Trooper.

Unipol has thousands of technical staff specializing in everything from satellite surveillance to weapons maintenance, but it is usually from the many bays and garages aboard the Arcs that Field Engineers are recruited. It is this type of lateral thinking that is especially sought after, for once on the ground, things rarely go as planned and all operatives must be able think on their feet. If the Engineer of a CSO incursion crew is not able to come up with a solution on the move and under duress, not only would the mission fail, but also they are unlikely to survive. The Field Engineer is all too aware of his responsibilities and must be able to take the immense psychological pressure that comes with the job, knowing that the success or failure of the mission as well as the lives of others will often rest on his shoulders. This is not a responsibility many would care to have or to volunteer for.

It is a special kind of individual who joins the Engineering corps of Unipol as the incentives and pay of the corporate world are far above anything they could ever receive while being an enlisted officer. But to the many men and women in the corps that is not the point – it is doing the right thing, knowing that you are a vital part of a much bigger machine and, even if you are just a small cog, that it could not function without you.


Peter Johnston

FIELD ENGINEER DATA

Class: Human

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV	HACK
5	3	2	2	3	3	1

Points: 28

Armor: 2

			-1	-2	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

The CSO Field Engineer has the choice of carrying either a X-Tec Beamer or a Flamethrower, not both.

Combat Knife

Range: Close Combat only **Damage:** 2d6

EMP Grenades

Range: Thrown (BDY+5”) **Damage:** 4d6 P0(3)

Special: 3” Blast template

Only effects robots and does half damage to cyborgs - does NO damage to other models.

Flamethrower

Range: Spray Template **Damage:** 4d6 P1(0)

Special: Fire - any model touched by the template has automatically caught fire and cannot activate until it is extinguished. A model must roll a 4, 5 or 6 during the control phase to put itself out or it will automatically take 1 point of damage. Models on fire will move randomly during the control phase.

Heavy Pistol

Range: 8/18" -2LR **Damage:** 4d6 P1

Recon Drone

Special: +5 points - may re-arrange set-up on d3 independent models or teams on its crew after all models have been placed. If both players have Recon Drones, roll for priority.

Remote Board

Range: 12” +1

X-Tec Beamer

Range: 8/16” -1LR **Damage:** 5d6 P2

Special: Critical Fire – on the roll of a 6 during damage the model has caught fire.

SKILLS & ABILITIES:

- Handy
- Controller

Crew Allowance: 0-3
Independent

FIELD MEDIC

All Unipol medical staff are trained for field operations and, though not deployed on every assignment, having a doctor on the crew not only increases everyone's chance of survival, but also the success of the mission. A Medic's primary job is to 'patch and push,' getting those that can be patched up and back in the battle, while stabilizing those that cannot, ready for evac. When deployed for field operations, a Medic will usually be assigned at least one Medibot; these autonomous robotic doctors can 'fly' around treating those that are injured as well as any human. This is partly due to a direct link with either the on-scene Medic or the nearest CSO medical facility that advises it on courses of action and treatment. They are capable of operating without these links, but this greatly diminishes their success rate in treating casualties. For long-term deployments, Unipol mandates state there must be at least one Medic per platoon, but this is almost never the case as nowhere in the whole of the CSO is the lack of staff more evident than in its medical bays. Unfortunately, there are very few individuals who join the medical profession to help their fellow man, they much prefer to pursue lucrative contracts in the corporate sector. The few who do still uphold the values of the Hippocratic Oath either run free clinics in the favelas or, more commonly, find there way into service for the CSO. Like many others in the CSO, it is their responsibility to humanity that is more important than their personal wealth.

The job is a dangerous and often thankless task; many times CSO Medics will tend to the wounded of both sides after a conflict. Like all Unipol staff, they are trained to take care of themselves on the field, but they will never invite conflict as their primary mandate is to save lives not to take them.

FIELD MEDIC DATA

Class: Human

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV
5	1	1	2	3	3

Points: 21 **Armor:** 1

		-1	-2	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

Heavy Pistol

Range: 8/18" -2LR **Damage:** 4d6 P1

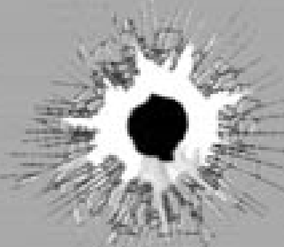
Combat Knife

Range: Close Combat only **Damage:** 2d6

SKILLS & ABILITIES:

- Controller (Specialty Medibot)
- Medic

Crew Allowance: 0-2
Independent



"Man has always been driven by greed. Whether for power, wealth, or whatever his simple mind can dream, it is a cancer that festers in the hearts and minds of them all. As he has grown from primitive savage to civilized barbarity, his methods of self-advancement have become more ingenious and devious. He will even eagerly step on the downtrodden and dying, if he thinks he can advance himself. It is this that makes mankind so fascinating as they scurry around leading their short pointless lives, sacrificing their own flesh and blood if they thought they could prolong that life for one day, one hour, one minute… one second longer. Yet, this is one of the things that make them so unique, my dear, one of the few species in the cosmos that willingly and eagerly destroys itself for some fleeting and imagined gain. How so like us…"

Grimalkin shifted, his huge steel limbs moving nimbly to their master's unspoken command, as Lilith stepped forward and stared out over the Los Angeles' skyline. The perpetual rain washed over the plexglass, forming thousands of mercurial rivers and blurring the city's illuminations into a fresco of neon colors, while the blinking lights of flyers slowly rose and fell in the night sky as if engaged in some bizarre aerial waltz.

THE PENAL LEGION

Since its formation, the CSO has always struggled to maintain sufficient numbers to deal with its responsibilities and, with the expansion of man into space, the task of maintaining the thin blue line has become almost impossible. The CSO has had to look to other resources when the need arises.

Out of the rise in crime and in the prison populations, there arose a solution that was controversial with many, including officers of the CSO. Yet the needs of the public outweigh the rights of the criminal so, struggling to maintain its forces, the CSO turned to the over-crowded penal colonies as a source of recruitment - although press gang would be a more accurate description! It was accepted that those who were chosen could not be trusted and some form of limiter must be implanted, but unfortunately this would slow their reflexes as well as curtailing their aggression. A new solution was found, although it was one that was not acceptable to everyone. Cranial implants, hardwired with enough Hi-EX to turn their owner into so much mist, allowed these ‘volunteers’ to become an important, and ultimately expendable, part of the CSO. Yet for the Penal Trooper, life is better than it was on penitentiaries like the Rock, as at least he gets three meals a day and exercise and recreation time; while for Unipol, it is a valid use of almost limitless resources.

When deployed, the Penal Troopers’ bombs are activated and a countdown clock begins; the team then has to complete its objectives and return to the controller for deactivation within the time limit, usually no longer than 30-60 minutes. Those that fail to return are vaporized when the countdown is complete. The bombs, although foolproof in their operation, have not always worked as a controlling factor. One incident that Unipol would have preferred to keep under wraps, but has now become almost legendary amongst Penal Troopers, is the cautionary tale of Marshal Letts and ‘Head’ Case McGee. While deployed under Letts’ command, McGee’s entire team of Penal Troopers, except himself, was wiped out after being ordered into a deadly crossfire. McGee turned and fled, or so everyone thought, but upon reaching Marshal Letts, he threw himself forward and violently head butted the Marshal with the activated cranial bomb, the resulting explosion tearing both of them apart. This tale somehow managed to find its way back to the holding cells and beyond, and has now almost become a mantra for the Penal Troopers whose idle time is often spent in extravagant revenge fantasies against their captors now that a road map has been supplied thanks to ‘Head’ Case McGee.

Fortunately these occurrences are very rare as it takes a truly courageous or insane person to end their life in such a way. In most cases, the deployment of Penal Troopers has met with complete success and not only do they keep the expensive prison populations down, they also help protect the lives of trained CSO officers. It is no secret that Penal Troopers are used as a screen for the more valuable Unipol assets following behind and there are even rumors that more unscrupulous commanders have detonated their teams upon reaching the enemy. Though Unipol have stated publicly that this type of behavior is not tolerated, disciplinary action was never brought against the commanders responsible.

For the more violent and uncontrollable prisoners on the Rock, a different treatment was developed and this, in its turn, has provided a further source of manpower for the CSO. Some prisoners were found to be uncooperative and even violent upon their incarceration, and refused to work their details. InCare was not the sort of company that would let valuable resources sit in a cell when there were quotas to be met. Instead they used extreme augmentation surgery to turn the unproductive into some of its most efficient and tireless workers, able to withstand the harsh elemental conditions of the mines with no fear for their personal safety. It emerged that some of the guards on the Rock were holding unsanctioned gladiatorial arenas and pitting Cyborg against Cyborg, temporarily overloading their inhibitors with raw current. This drove them into berserk rages where they would literally rip each other to shreds using the mining tools attached to their augmented limbs. Once vid footage had been leaked onto the Grid, Unipol publicly denounced the treatment and this abuse of prisoners, but said their hands were tied as any who entered the Rock as prisoners were no longer classified as human beings and therefore had no rights. Privately, however, they made a deal not to pursue the matter as long as they could occasionally take a few to supplement their forces when needed. Now docile, these abominations are able to stand up to incredible punishment and their mechanical limbs are far stronger than that of any normal man, while all it takes is a short sharp shock to release the fury within.

PENAL TROOPER DATA

Class: Human

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV
5	1	2	1	3	2

Points: 16

		-1	-2	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

Combat Knife

Range: Close Combat only **Damage:** 2d6

Cranial Bomb

Range: Self **Damage:** 4d6

Special: 3” Blast template.

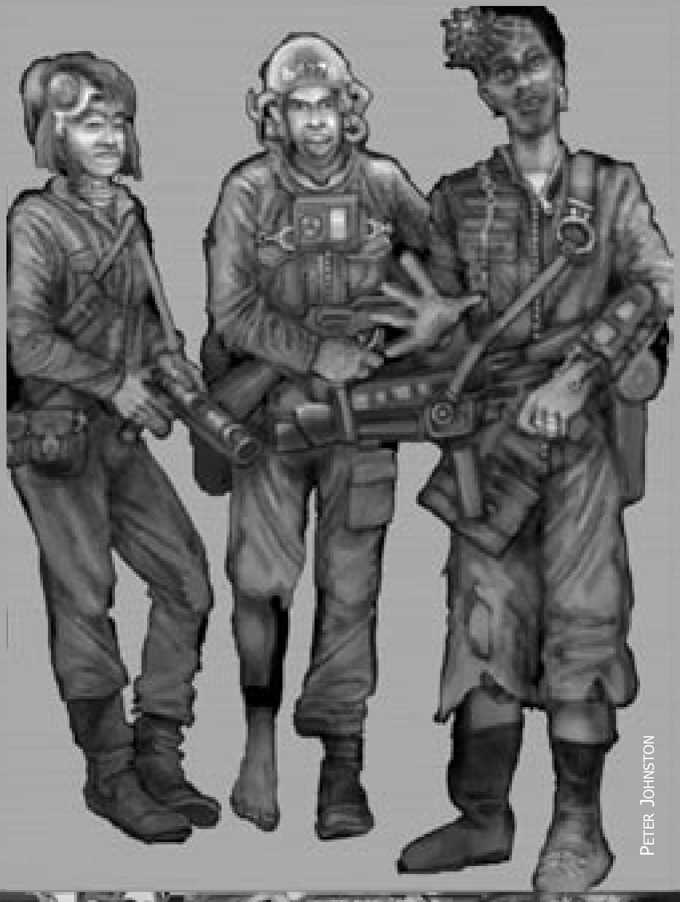
A player may detonate them voluntarily during the activation of any model on his crew with the Leadership ability. If a Penal Trooper is killed on a d6 roll of 5 or 6 it will also detonate.

SMG

Range: 8/16" -2LR **Damage:** 6d6/4d6

Special: Automatic

Crew Allowance: 0-4
Team Allowance: 4-10



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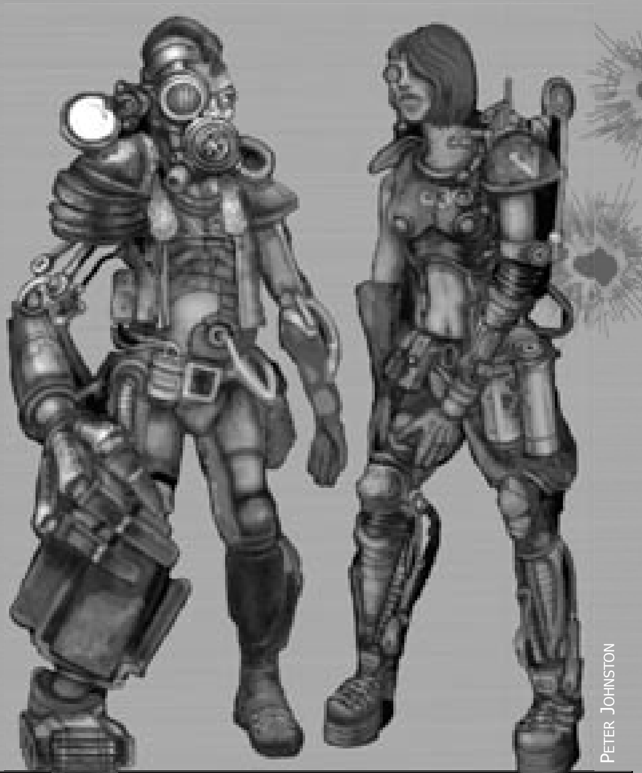

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PENAL LEGION CYBORG DATA

Class: Cyborg

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV
5	-	2	1	4	5

Points: 21 **Armor:** 2

					-1	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

Cranial Bomb

Range: Self **Damage:** 4d6

Special: 3” Blast template.

A player may detonate them voluntarily during the activation of any model on his crew with the Leadership ability. If a Penal Trooper is killed on a d6 roll of 5 or 6 it will also detonate.

Mining Tools

Range: Close Combat only **Damage:** 3d6

Special: Model received additional 1d6 damage dice on the damage rolls of a 5 or 6, instead of just the usual 6.

SKILLS & ABILITIES:

- Berserk
- Shrug-it-Off

Crew Allowance: 0-2 per Penal Trooper Team
Independent

FIRST RESPONSE

The red light blinked on and off repeatedly, warning Marshal Langstrom that his attention was needed. Flicking the switch, the screen leapt into electronic life and the face of Trooper Swartzer appeared.

“Langstrom here, What is it, Trooper? This is supposed to be my rest period.”

“Sorry, sir, but I think you should see this.” Swartzer was aware that disturbing Marshal Langstrom during his down time could be a very career limiting action.

“Ok, patch it through to my quarters,” replied Langstrom, resigning himself to the fact that he was not going to get any more rest this period.

“I’m sorry, sir, but I think it would be better if you came to Comm Bay 2,” Swartzer paused; he was tense, waiting for the expected reaction from the Marshal. Why did this kind of thing have to happen on his watch? He always tried to keep his head down and not attract any adverse attention.

“This had better be good, Trooper.” The screen went blank as Langstrom broke the connection. Grabbing his jacket and holsters he strode out of the room.

The corridors of Unipol Ark C5 seemed quiet even for this time of night, the moonlight casting an eerie light over the metal walls. The Arks were like self-contained cities and, no matter what time of day or night, there was usually a hustle and bustle of people, but tonight seemed to be unnervingly quiet.

Marshal Langstrom strode purposefully down the corridor, his coat swirling out behind him and his Hammerhead resting firmly at his side. Even while on the Arks, marshals were never seen without their weapons. In the unlikely event of an Ark being compromised (an idea that was hard to contemplate as the huge flying behemoths were surrounded by radar technology that could detect a fly within a hundred feet of the surface) all personnel were armed to act the instant a threat was determined. Parting a marshal from his Hammerhead was a task even more impossible to imagine….!

The door to Communications Bay 2 slid open in front of him and Marshal Langstrom stepped inside.

“So, what’s the big emergency that you have to disturb my beauty sleep?” Langstrom knew the apprehension that Swartzer must be feeling, for he was well aware that his reputation of being one of the least forgiving of the marshals in the sector was well earned.

“We received this feed from one of our surveillance drones in Sector 2257. It appears that surveillance target Alpha7 is being compromised, sir.” Trooper Swartzer gave the details in a clear and respectful tone.

“Sector 2257, that’s the Elysium pyramid in Atlanta. I was under the impression that Elysium was out of bounds for surveillance these days.” Langstrom’s interest had been aroused.

Swartzer hesitated, “Yes, sir, but Arbitrator Rosen instigated a Code 6 surveillance before going down to the surface. Currently we have engineers setting up various EDs to infiltrate the perimeter. The Arbitrator’s instructions were clear, report directly to him and nobody else when anything came in.”

“So you’re reporting this to me, Trooper? Disobeying the direct order from an Arbitrator.” Langstrom kept his smile to himself. He had to keep his reputation intact, it was useful, but he also knew something important must have happened for a direct violation of an order by a console-bound administrator like Swartzer.

“I can’t reach him, sir. I’ve been repeatedly trying to get hold of him, but with no success.”

“I might have guessed Rosen would continue his investigation despite orders to the contrary,” replied Langstrom, more to himself than to Swartzer.

“What should I do, sir?” asked Swartzer, not quite sure if he had escaped Langstrom’s legendary wrath or not.

“What does the feed show?”

“This came in about ten minutes ago, sir.” The screen in front of Swartzer came to life.

The image seemed to shake very slightly, the telltale signs that the feed was from one of the older, rotor variety, surveillance drones. The screen showed the Elysium Inc pyramid, its huge black shape dwarfing the buildings around it. The image moved in closer to the surface of the pyramid, to a small ledge about twelve stories off the ground, where five figures could be seen. Two of them seemed to be attempting to open a small hatchway, while the other three were keeping guard.

“Looks like they could be an APAC crew. Now what would they be wanting with Elysium Inc?” asked Langstrom.

“I don’t know, sir, but Arbitrator Rosen seemed very adamant that the surveillance needed to be set up immediately despite the orders to stay clear of Elysium. He mentioned something about people going missing, but didn’t say anything more.”

“I must admit I am intrigued by this image, but why show this to me? All corporate crimes should be reported straight to your Watch Commander.”

“Keep watching, sir.”

The vid-link continued. The two figures continued to work at the hatchway where the lock seemed to be giving them a lot more trouble than they expected. The image pulled back and panned right, where a robe-covered face, only mouth and chin visible amongst the flowing material, appeared in full view. The figure was looking directly at the surveillance drone. Getting the attention of the TADS next to it, the figure pointed straight at the drone. The TADS turned, raised its arm and fired. The blast took out the drone and the image ceased in a blast of static.

“Son of a bitch, how did they know the drone was there? How far from the scene was the drone when it was taken out?” Langstom was amazed. These drones, although old, were incredibly hard to spot as they almost completely blended in with the background.

“About five hundred meters, sir.”

“I refuse to believe they could have spotted the drone from that distance. Were there any other drones in the area?”

“Another five, sir. When contact was lost with D60, D74 responded and moved to the location. I have the feed from D74 as well, sir. This was the one that really concerned me,” said Trooper Swartzer.

The image on the screen returned, now focused on the open hatchway with no sign of the crew. The image continued for a few seconds and then a figure came into view, pulling himself up onto the ledge, his legs swinging up to grip the edge to gain leverage. The long coated figure stood surveying the area with weapon drawn. A Hammerhead!

“Rosen! Damn him, what is he up to?” exclaimed Marshal Langstrom.

Arbitrator Rosen looked around and, with his back against the wall, he leant inside the hatchway. Without further delay, he swung into the opening and disappeared. The image of the open hatchway was all that remained for a couple of minutes and then another two figures were seen landing gracefully on the platform - a move that was all the more surprising because of their height and bulk. The two TADS strode towards the hatchway, some communication seeming to pass between them, as they too entered the pyramid.

“My God, Rosen will be trapped. How long ago was this image taken?” demanded Langstrom.

“About seven minutes now, sir. I tried contacting Arbitrator Rosen, but I couldn’t get a reply, just static. Whatever those pyramids are made of they must interfere with communication.”

“Did you try scanning the area?”

“I need a level 6 clearance code to do that, sir,” replied the Trooper.

“I know that, Swartzer, don’t play games with me, what was the result of the scan?”

“Well, I…” Swartzer struggled with his response, then took the decision. He had already disobeyed an order from an Arbitrator, what had he got to lose. “The scans were negative, sir. They couldn’t penetrate the pyramid even on the higher settings.”

“That’s better, you did well, son. This time.” Langstrom turned to a console in the wall and typed his clearance code.

“Good evening, Marshal Langstrom. How may I be of service to you?” The soft calm voice always annoyed Langstrom. What was wrong with having a real person rather than this abomination.

“I need a unit for an immediate drop. Oh, and include AJ in this one, we could need the firepower.”

“Unit DD7 is on duty. They are in Evac Bay 7. Please supply sector coordinates sir.”

“The destinations classified, just get them to be ready to drop.”

“I am sorry, sir, but as you are fully aware, directive 769 prohibits me from authorizing drops into unknown areas. I will need sector coordinates to authorize the activity… ”

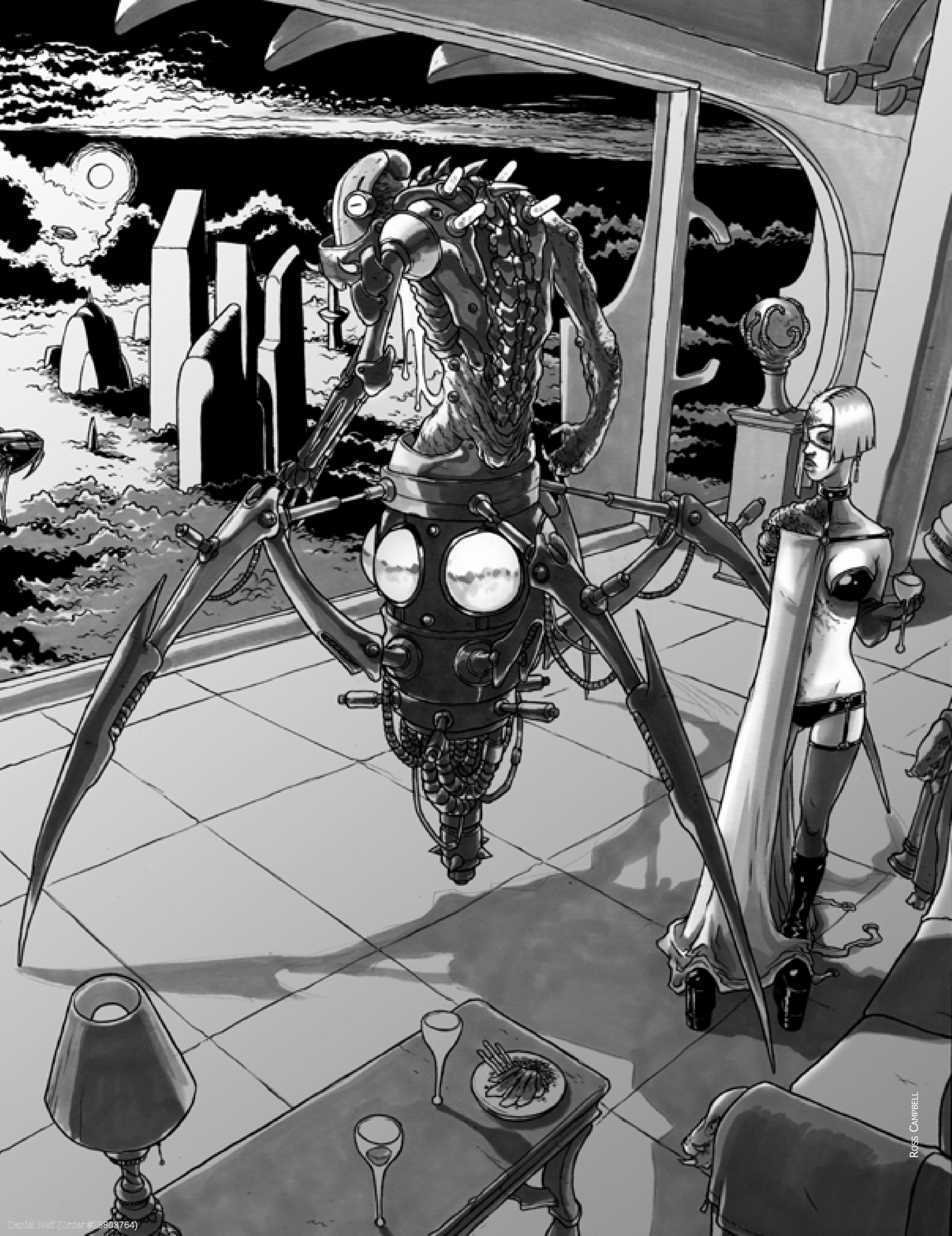
Langstrom’s fingers nimbly inserted a small data card into the console; sometimes forgetting about the odd piece of evidence was a necessary evil.

The voice returned, this time directed at all personnel.

“This is a Code 7 Emergency Evacuation Drill, commencement in 3 minutes. Marshal Langstrom, report to Evac Bay 7 immediately. Unit DD7, report to Evac Bay 7 immediately.”

Langstrom smiled as he removed the card, the biodegradable disk disintegrating in his fingers. The machines may be thinking for themselves, but a simple insertion of data could still get results.

He turned to Swartzer. “Right Trooper, your shift here is over, so you’re with me. Get your gear and meet me in Evac Bay 7 in 2 minutes and grab AJ on your way. You’re going for a ride.”



Ross Campbell

THE DRAVANI

Battled scarred and venting plasma, the Dravani cruiser limped into the Sol System; one of the few ships that had managed to escape when the enemy came, pulverizing world after world and enslaving their populations. Grimalkin had been fortunate; he was chief administrator on the free-range farm planet of Eird when the enemy arrived there, light years away from their initial incursion into Dravani space. Realizing resistance was hopeless, he gathered together as many as he could, friends, families, colleagues and strangers alike, and fled. However, luck was not completely on their side as a couple of long-range scout ships were in the area and, although they were not able to pursue them very far, they inflicted considerable damage on his ship. Ordering everyone into their cryo-coffins, he set the ship's autopilot for the uncharted regions before joining them in a timeless slumber.

For an age the ship traversed the outreaches of space until, with its power nearly exhausted, it came across a small blue planet in a far-away galaxy; with no other choice available, the ship knew this was its final destination. Although there was no sign of industrialization or technology, the planet was thriving with life and so met the basic requirements of its masters. Systems failing and being torn apart by the atmosphere, the ship headed towards one of the most heavily populated continents.

Grimalkin and his brethren awoke in chilling and primitive surroundings, with the energy from the planet's star burning and twisting their flesh. Their technology was destroyed in the crash and there were few means available to recreate them on the uncivilized rock they were now to call home, but at least they were safe and the enemy had not pursued them. Their new home was also teaming with the sustenance that was necessary for their survival, the dominant species being particularly palatable to them. They scattered into the darkness and regressed to become the predators that were their heritage.

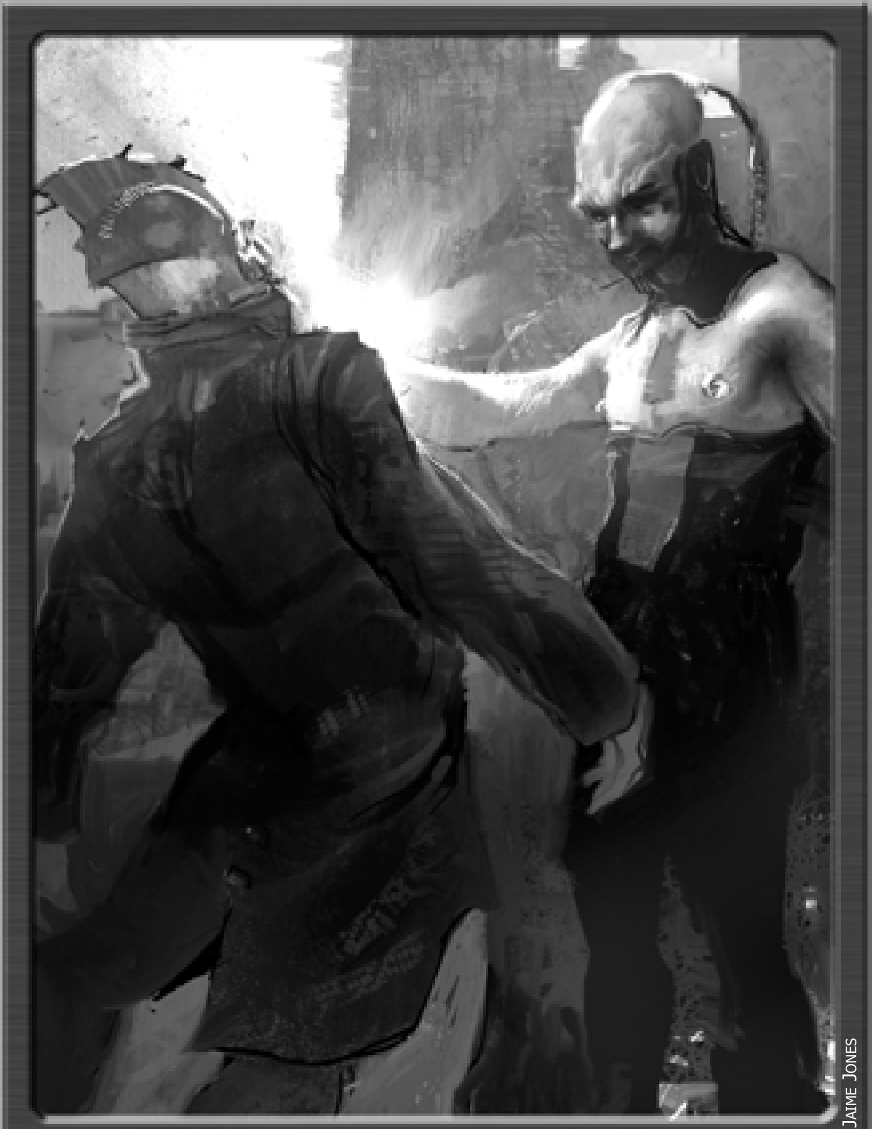
Time passed and their numbers grew, yet they kept themselves to the shadows, all the time watching the indigenous descendants grow more confident and more technologically advanced. As a species, the Dravani were gifted in many ways and, though not having the mental powers of some races, they all had some measure of aptitude and were able to influence and manipulate the minds of lesser beings. Using these gifts, the ancients were able to walk unseen amongst the herds, satisfying their need for sustenance and in the process creating the lore and legend of things that dwell in the dark places. As man held aloft the torch of science, they became emboldened and came into the cities, finding new hiding places within the now burgeoning metropolises. They found that the towns and cities were now the perfect feeding ground, but, although they were powerful, they were still woefully few in number and had to remain vigilant always. The Dravani, protected by this new age of reason and discovery, found the old tales fading into myth as civilization breeds a special kind of ignorance.

It was during this time that Grimalkin began to try to bring together the scattered remains of those that had survived and flourished on this alien world, although some resisted his call for unity, claiming they had as much right or more to rule. He dealt with the opposition swiftly and brutally, and it looked as if civil war would do what the enemy had not. Terrible in his might, he crushed many of his opponents, but there were some he dared not attack such as Melisandra and Lilith - particularly Lilith, as royal blood flowed through her porcelain frame and made her a populist choice. She also had the support of the few society members that had been fortunate to be on Eird as well as the unwavering loyalty of her elite guards, the only combat troops that had come with them to this backwards planet. Quickly he devised a plan and propositioned her, stating that it was the only way to survive here and that they must act immediately before these pointless conflicts dwindled their numbers too far. For eight days no answer was forthcoming, but then Lilith conceded to becoming his consort. Most were pleased by this union between the one who had saved them from the enemy and one of such high birth; when it was announced, resistance faded almost overnight. No longer would they be scattered, beaten refugees eeking out a meager existence and hiding from the world in dank caves, murky forests and leaking castles. They had cowered too long, fearing the threat of the enemy; it was time to reclaim their heritage now they were united under one banner. Once more others would tremble and bow before them. Grimalkin still urged patience, however, for their numbers here were still small and the recent violence had only decreased them further. Although their lives were almost endless, they did not breed as fast as those that surrounded them, with a female only being able to birth a maximum of three young over the course of her life.

A few did not heed Grimalkin's call and took no part in the unification, preferring to stay in the dark places of the earth, finding solace in the night and the hunt.

Grimalkin knew that if he were to escape this world in the future, he would need currency and lots of it. As a race the Dravani were dexterous and appreciative of art and beauty, so he began to create business after business, from couture in Milan to jewelers in Vienna, and thus the House of Dravani prospered. Unfortunately, the inhabitants of this blighted little world had intolerably short lives; brilliant minds bloomed, but then perished all too quickly. Grimalkin realized it was going to take a very long time for them to gain the technology they needed to escape their exile and reap revenge upon the enemy, so they might as well make themselves as comfortable as possible.

At the end of the 20th century, having lived amongst them for six centuries, man was less aware of their existence than he had ever been and the fortunes of what was now Dravani International had grown exponentially. However, there was something more important to worry about; something that had started decades ago and the true impact of which would only be realized when it was too late. This system's sun had always been dangerous to the Dravani due to the amount of ultraviolet radiation that it emitted, a weakness possibly resulting from their unique chameleon-like abilities. They had so far avoided any serious consequences by limiting their daylight activities, their regenerative powers able to deal with all but the most severe 'sunburn'. However, by the middle of the 21st century many Dravani were beginning to develop tumors and were finding that their regenerative powers could only slow the effects, not stop them completely. Increased feeding helped, but if they were all to feed at the rate necessary to stave off the onset of disease, they would jeopardize their security and risk becoming visible to their unwitting hosts. Grimalkin decided to turn the wealth of his empire to finding a cure, but as the planet's pollution worsened and ozone depletion increased, so did the effects on the Dravani population. No longer was it restricted to isolated tumors and malignant growths, but a new wave of mutation began to be seen amongst Dravani society. Initially they occurred among the fringe elements of the Dravani that lived amongst the humans in the projects and the slums. Here they were not afforded the protection from the increasingly dangerous solar rays provided by the domed cities that were now being built across the globe to shield those of wealth and importance.



Melisandra, one of the few members of the aristocracy who had escaped the enemy, discovered that human organs could be transplanted into Dravani. Once the infected organ was removed and replaced by a healthy one, the unique Dravani system would swarm it, manipulating and changing it at a cellular level to provide a healthy, but temporary, replacement. Grimalkin was worried that, by doing this, Melisandra and her Baggers would draw the attention of the humans, but also realized that if a permanent solution was not found, they would be condemning their race to extinction. As Grimalkin brooded on what to do, Melisandra took her sect into the outer cities and began spreading her gospel of the hunter and the hunted, drawing together many who believed in her ideas as well as those that were so deformed they had been banished to the under-cities and the shadows.

With rumors growing of monsters and mutants in the favelas, Grimalkin decided the time had come to act before some enterprising media crew finally primetimed them. These insane and mutated creatures must be rounded up and destroyed and, even if it meant her destruction, Melisandra's rabble-rousing must come to an end. He would personally lead the hunt; a hunt that would last over two years and would almost cost him his life.

In Grimalkin's absence, Lilith assumed full control of the corporate empire and continued the research to find a more stable and permanent solution than that provided by the Baggers. In particular was a promising young company named Elysium Sleep Systems who were pioneering research in the field of cryogenic freezing and life extension, for Grimalkin had seen another possible use for their developments. He had become a major shareholder and had sent Dravani science teams to work alongside theirs to help push their experiments in the right direction. Lilith eased into her new role as only one born to rule can; also, seeing the promise at Elysium, she increased their funding.

For two years Grimalkin pursued Melisandra and her sect around the globe, wiping out enclaves wherever he found them, accompanied by some of his most loyal retainers and a detachment of Lilith's elite Brides. Whispers, however, began to circulate in Dravani society that Grimalkin had become lunatic and was unfit to rule; his singular pursuit of Melisandra and her followers was more damaging to their existence than her 'peculiarities.' The rumors finally reached his ears; at first he ignored them, but as they persisted he began to see the truth and after a particularly deadly encounter between the two factions amongst the sunken ruins of Calcutta, he sent word to Melisandra that they should come to an accord. A meeting was agreed upon in Bhaktapur in Nepal and the two sides sat down to talk.

Word reached Lilith that the hunt was finally coming to an end. Grimalkin was weary and had been seriously injured; having once again become accustomed to power, she saw her opportunity to keep it. She ordered her Brides, elite assault units sworn to the royal line, to kill his aids and deal with Grimalkin. Fearing retribution if others learned she had ordered him killed, she decided instead to use an ancient proving ritual where one was abandoned in the wilds with nothing but their wits. If he died during this, it was proof enough that he was no longer fit to command. The brutal solar radiation, now at deadly levels for them during the day, would help 'even' the odds for, even tired and wounded, Grimalkin was not to be underestimated.

After days of continuous negotiations Melisandra and Grimalkin finally reached an agreement in which as long as she could control the mutants and keep them from human sight, he would not destroy them. In addition, he would be able to call on the Baggers and their creatures whenever he was in need. Melisandra, however, would no longer be welcome in the central cities and must live on the outskirts along with her followers. As Grimalkin went to retire, weary but satisfied, Lilith's forces struck. Cutting down his retinue with ease, they descended upon him and, although he fought fiercely, he finally succumbed to their superior numbers.

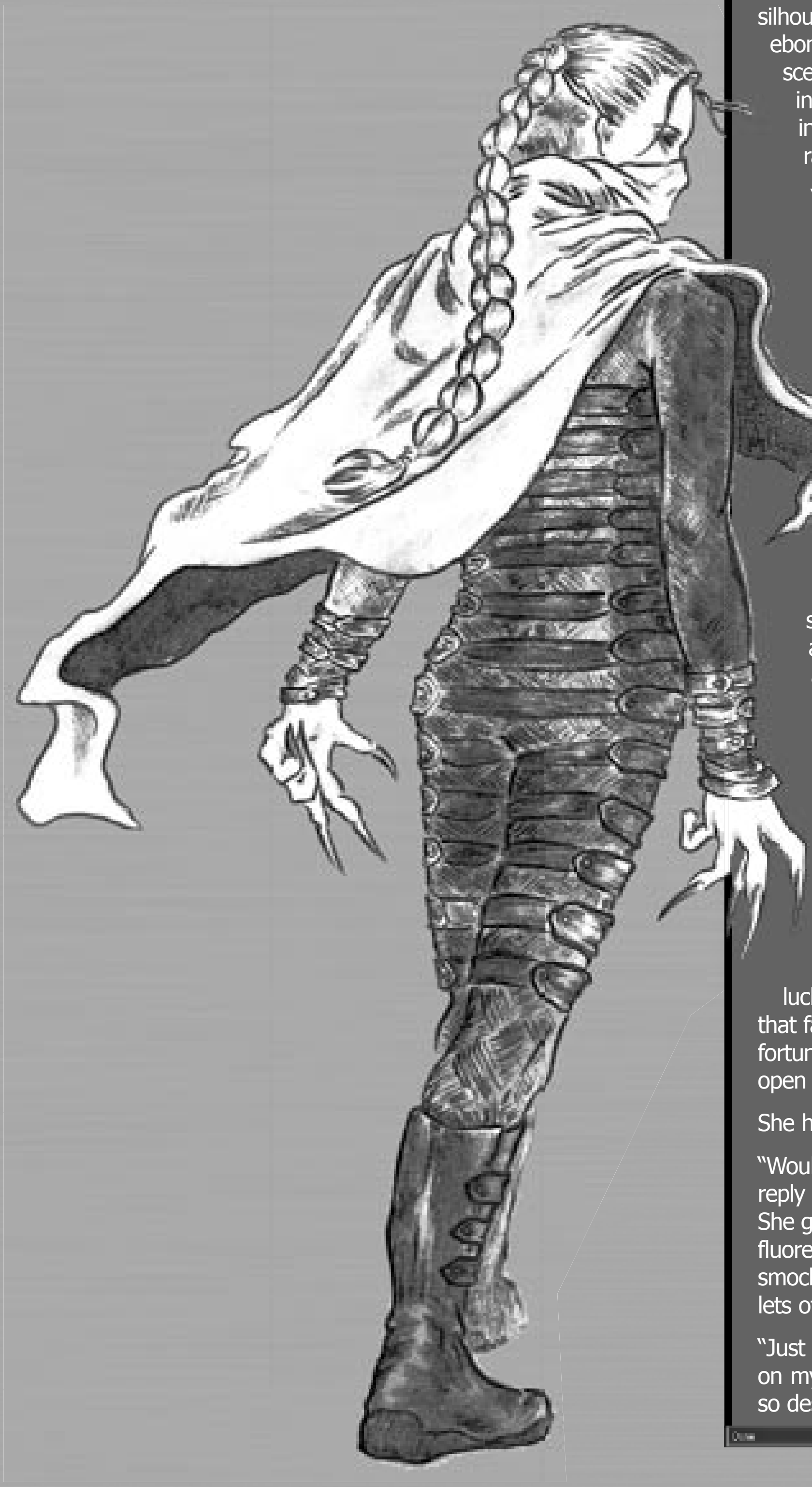
After Grimalkin failed to reappear from the Indian subcontinent, the shadows were again rife with rumor. Like any 'dutiful' spouse, Lilith had sent out rescue parties to everywhere she knew he would not be. After three months she sent a team of Brides to dispose of any incriminating evidence that may have been left, but of Grimalkin or his remains there was no sign.

Approaching the second anniversary of Grimalkins 'disappearance,' Lilith awakened from her sleep and the grizzled appearance of two Souless greeted her. Her guards lay drained on the floor, nothing more than wrinkled bags of skin and bones. Another Souless glided effortlessly into her chamber, this one she recognized – Ashitur! His sonorous voice reverberated inside her head, " Your Master awaits."

Word of Grimalkin's return spread faster than fire and his wrath was even fiercer. Over half of Lilith's Brides were killed that first night and more the following day, while many of her administrators were tortured and then put to death. Grimalkin also called on Melisandra to keep to her word and send forces to Dravani facilities worldwide. Although she had been more than happy with his disappearance, Melisandra was no fool and did as he asked. Grimalkin no longer appeared in public, the once invisible Souless were now his hands in the outside world. Rumors flickered through Dravani society that Grimalkin had returned changed, a monster that only the Souless could bare to look upon. Finally, he sent a message to his people that Lilith had survived that night and was once more at her husband's side, there were wounds that could be healed and they were once more in unity. For too many years they had lost numbers of their kind in petty infighting as well as to the ravages of the sun; they must now consolidate and work together.

The research at Elysium was now beginning to bear its bitter fruit. The Dravani had always managed to find willing servants among the humans, for there were those who sought eternity above all else. Now they could all be offered a form of eternity and, not only did Grimalkin see the profit in this, but his teams within Elysium had been covertly working on how to subvert the technology to fulfill another more sinister purpose. The Elysium process took those near death and suspended them in a cryogenic state while their brains were hardwired into an electronic fantasy world of their choosing. The Dravani fed on the life energies of its prey and they had discovered how to siphon off the necessary energies from those in stasis. With enough bodies in the system it would take years for them to die, possibly decades, and by then they would have been forgotten by most. Grimalkin acquired the company outright and then began construction on more sites in major cities around the world. All they needed now were people who did not want to die…

Elysium Inc. was an instant success; their somber black pyramids became a familiar sight in major cities throughout the world and catapulted Dravani International to center stage amongst the other major multi-nationals. This was not unexpected, but it was more scrutiny than they wanted. Realizing their years of anonymity may soon be over, Grimalkin began to place his human vassals in media and government organizations to make sure nothing compromising could be revealed and that the authorities were kept out of Dravani business. While the success of Elysium now provided enough sustenance for their survival on Earth, Grimalkin perceived a new threat in space - man. When the first colony ships had blasted off, Grimalkin was sure they were doomed to failure, but he had underestimated human spirit and ingenuity. They were now setting up colonies and multiplying in space faster than rabbits; Grimalkin knew it was only a matter of time before they attracted the attention of the enemy and the Dravani were not yet prepared for another encounter so soon. Seeing only one course of action, Grimalkin began to sanction operations against other corporations to steal technology and personnel. Although these types of activities were now standard business practice in the corporate world, until now the Dravani had avoided them, fearing it would cause unwanted attention and possible retribution. Now, however, Grimalkin realized there was no other choice - they would not be caught unawares and wanting again.



E.M.C.Oo

"Mistress?"

A weak voice stuttered in the long shadowed room, illuminated only by a few guttering flames. Slowly, with shoulders and head bowed, he approached the dais on which the silhouette of a perfect form lay wrapped in gossamer silks of ebon night. The smell of the charnel house mixed with the scent of heavy incense cloyed at his senses, almost choking the breath from him, as he squinted through watering eyes, trying to make out the shape as it shifted and ran beneath the silken covers.

"Mistress?" he intoned again.

The simpering voice awoke Melisandra from her reverie.

"Why do you wake me? Did I not wish to slumber until order had been restored or the world above had turned to ash."

"I'm afraid neither has come to pass, but he wishes an audience. He says he has a task for you."

"I was being fanciful, a little jest." Her eyes sparkled, catching the weak light and reflecting it around the chamber, but then the humor left her as the message sank in and Grimalkins glyph stared back, branded into the Vassal's forehead. The arrogance - she should have sided with the others and overthrown him at the beginning. It was only her honor and sense of duty to the line that had stopped her, but this last century had been very trying.

First there was his "disapproval" of her families' methods and then with these machines of his… it went against their very nature - she and hers would continue to feed and live as they always had. They did not fear the weak flesh of this world. He may feel he had gained respectability and power, but he would always be a simple bureaucrat to her. It was probably the first time he had considered himself lucky to be stationed so far from the home world since that fateful day centuries past. She smiled to herself, it was fortunate she had been visiting relatives to take part in the open season on the wild tribes there.

She heard the Vassal's heart race faster at her smile.

"Would you like to enjoy our favor, servant?" she knew his reply and needed no answer, "Then bring me my gloves." She gestured to an alcove and, as if by a hidden command, fluorescents flickered to life. They revealed a heavy leather smock and, on a shelf next to her mask, two massive gauntlets of shining adamantine with bizarre and lethal designs.

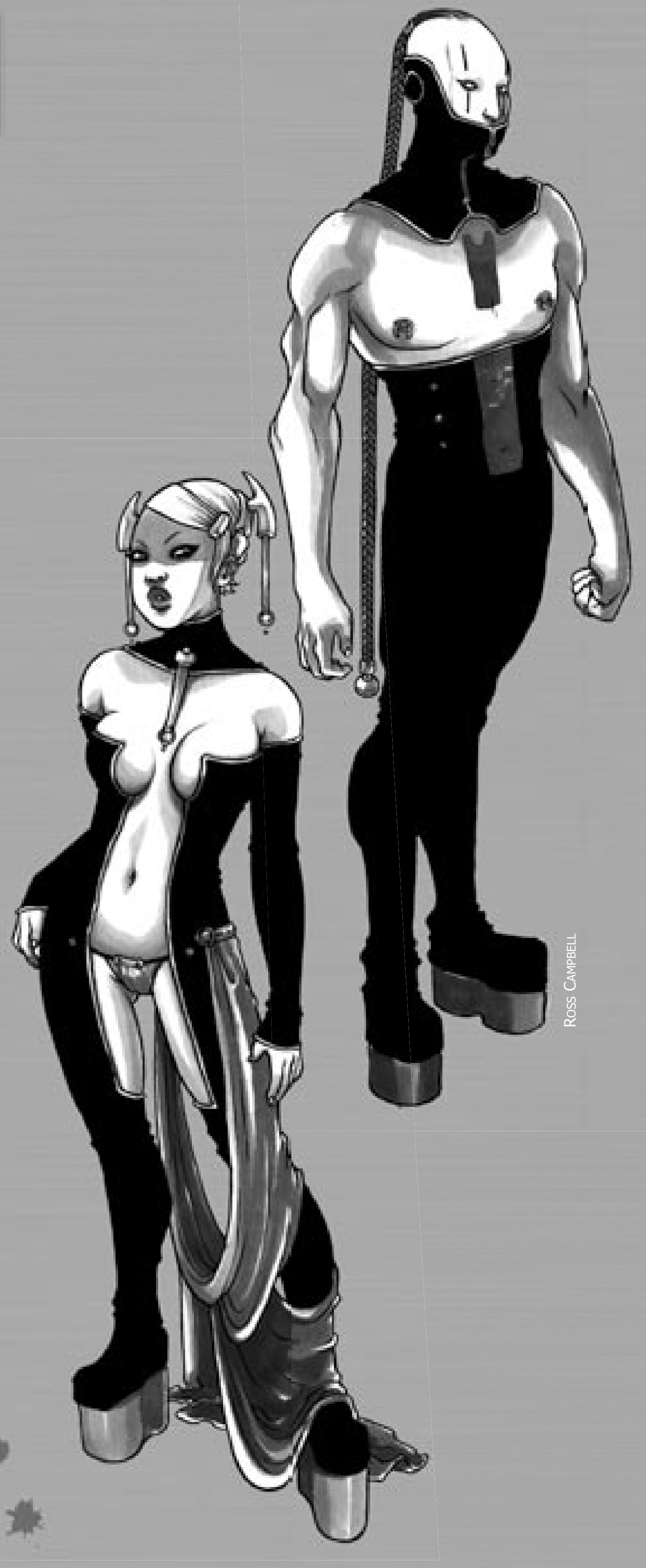
"Just my gloves. You shall have the rare pleasure of looking on my form whilst I work – for I know it is the image you so desire to see."

DRAVANI (HUMAN FORM)

For eons the Dravani have existed; spreading fear throughout the stars, whispered legends on a thousands worlds and known by more names than the years of time they have existed. However, it was never their design to spread out amongst the planets and, although they are tenacious and arrogant by nature, they are also fearful and insular. For most of its year, the Dravani homeworld of Intuneric is shrouded in twilight, with deep winters that include seventy-three days of complete darkness and a summer that is only a feeble month of sickly sun. Yet, even on this cold and inhospitable world, life flourished; there were many species, each deadlier than the next, but with the Dravani as the pinnacle of the evolutionary ladder.

The Dravani cultural evolution had ground to a halt in what would be equivalent to Earth's feudal societies of the late Middle Ages. Due to their longevity, the Dravani were lethargic and decadent, content to lounge and indulge themselves, and it is quite possible that without intervention, they would never have made it into space. Their indolent existence, however, was interrupted by the arrival of peaceful explorers from a far-off world. Thinking the Dravani primitive and struggling against a cruel and violent world, they took pity on them and decided to shepherd them towards a more 'civilized' level of existence. The Dravani, eager for entertainment and excitement after years of stupor, hid their true predatory nature from these visitors and lapped up their stories of other worlds and the rich abundance of life that lay beyond their atmosphere. The visitors were amazed at how quickly their pupils learned, mastering anything they taught them in a matter of months and such was their pride in their 'primitive children', they were not expecting anything when the Dravani finally rose against them.

When one of the visitors wished to explore a mountain range near the capital of Nemuritor Oras, he was assigned a local guide and they set off, neither realizing this small hiking trip would change the fate of these two races as well as many others throughout the stars. Eight days later, Luminark, the guide, returned alone and was immediately brought before the royal assembly where he told his tale. Three days out, they had been attacked by a Vamar after they had accidentally stumbled into its lair while seeking shelter from a storm. Luminark defended his charge, but suffered grievous wounds. He knew he would not make it to the next day, so he did what any Dravani would do: he reached out and drained the visitor to help heal himself. Every living thing has an essence, a life-force, and it is from this that the Dravani sustain their existence. They are able to


Ross Campbell

see it as a shimmering halo of colors; these auras vary from creature to creature and even plants give off this luminescence, although theirs is dull and still compared to animal life-forms. The visitors' auras were almost blinding to the Dravani, bright beacons eclipsing anything nearby, which they had put down to their alien physiology, but Luminark now knew the truth and it was sweet. He could have drained a creature twice the visitor's size and not have healed himself as he did; not only were its rejuvenating effects amazing, but the 'taste' was exquisite. The court was intrigued by this revelation and so they invited a party of the visitors to 'dine' with them, including the captain of the expedition. After that apocryphal meal, things happened fast: the Dravani already had influence over a number of the weaker members of the alien crew and they used them to gain access to all levels of the visitors' ships. Within an hour they were all either dead or vassals to their new masters.

The visitors' homeworld was the first to fall; the name of their race now lost in time, for in the early years of the Dravani expansion, extinction was a common fate. There were never wars or open conflict, for the Dravani had unique skills and abilities that enabled them to hide amongst races and gradually infiltrate all levels of their society. Careful to cover their tracks, they would acquire positions of power and, although complete infiltration of a world could take many decades, when they finally revealed themselves, the population was already subjugated and nothing more than 'cattle'. Sentient life was the sweetest meat they had tasted and the universe was brimming with it. On Intuneric their abilities were in balance, but freed from those confines, the Dravani were as gods and that was how they came to view themselves. Yet the humbling of the Dravani race came swiftly and violently, and so they found themselves on Earth.

The exiles that now make their home within humanity are far removed from the reapers of worlds that trod the stars centuries ago. Their biggest asset to the success of their survival amongst man is the innate Dravani ability to shift its form; thus they can hide amongst the population, as well as protect those amongst them that cannot. Though in truth, they are never truly hidden as even in human form a Dravani exudes power, attracting the weak and desperate like flies to honey, even before they flex their considerable powers of persuasion. Surviving on earth, however, has presented some unique challenges for the Dravani; not only are there the adverse effects of its environmental conditions and having to live hidden amongst a 'hostile' population, but as a race they are not technologically advanced. They have always preferred other races to develop, design and manufacture for them, lacking the initiative or the motivation to do so themselves; somewhat due, possibly, to the harsh conditions on their home world of Intuneric. The Dravani of Earth 2175 have regained some of their old composure, but are still very aware that they are refugees and that exposure to humanity would spell their doom - for what are hundreds against billions. No Dravani has forgotten that the Great Enemy is still out there and, although they yearn for revenge, survival is by far a greater motivation.

DRAVANI (HUMAN FORM) DATA

Class: Alien

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV	REP
6	2	3	3	4	4	1

Points: 72 **Armor:** 2

				-2	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

Dual Heavy Pistols

Range: 8/18" -2LR **Damage:** 4d6 P1

Special: May choose to fire twice per turn at -1 RCA per shot or once as normal.

Mono-Blades

Range: Close Combat only **Damage:** 4d6 P2

Special: Parry - model may add +2 to their CCA score in close combat, but if their score is greater than their opponent they do no damage and the combat is considered a draw.

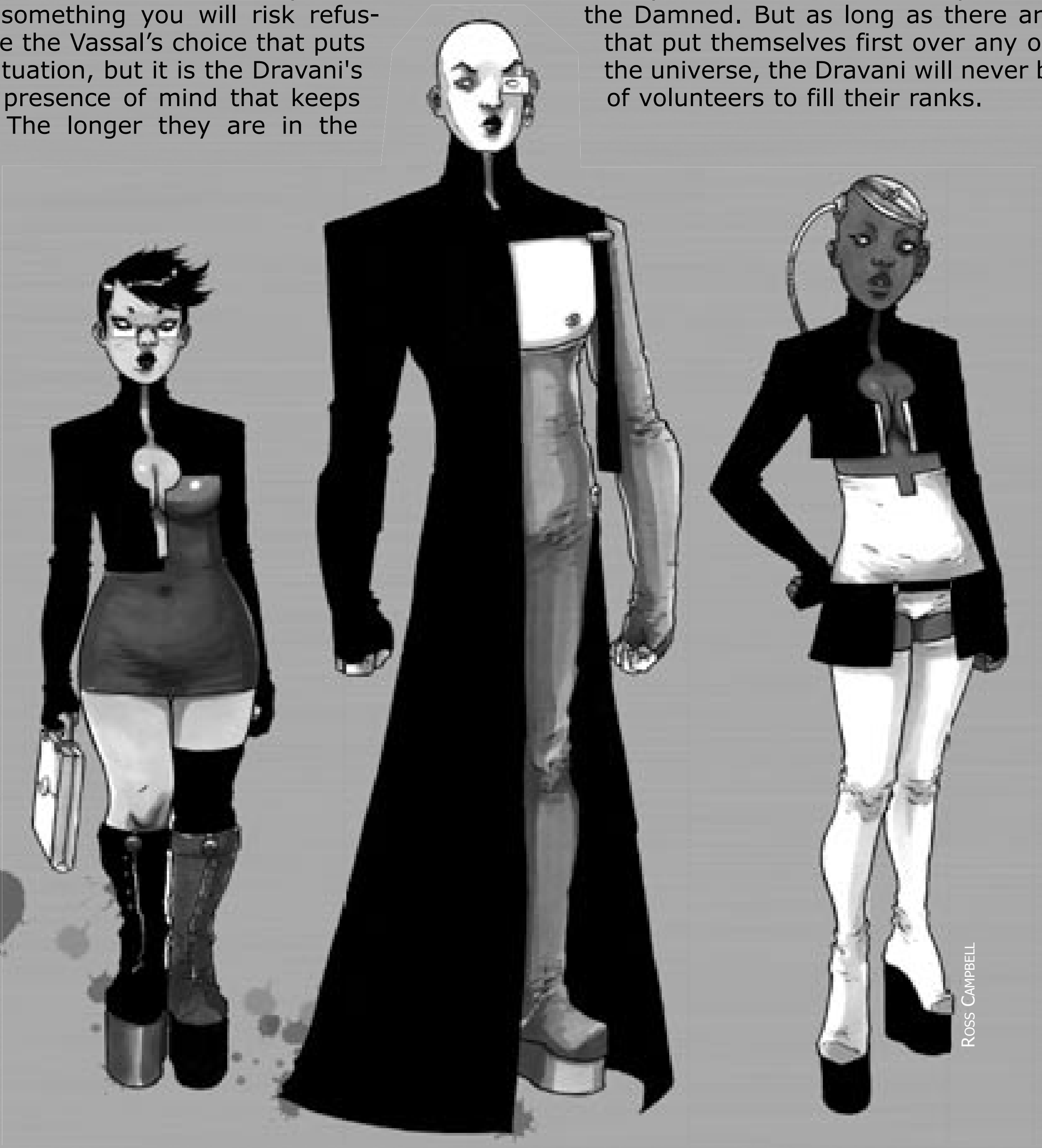
SKILLS & ABILITIES:

- Drain
- Presence
- Shrug-it-Off
- Swift
- Feed
- Regenerate
- Sufferance

Crew Allowance: Up to 2 Dravani (Human Form) per team of Vassals
Independent

VASSALS

Since the earliest days of conquest, the Dravani have always relied on the greed and selfishness of other species. There is not one race that has not had supplicants that would willingly sell out there own kind for the promise of material wealth or the ultimate grail of immortality - something which is not even theirs to give, as many would believe it is. Humanity is no different from those that have gone before and for the Dravani there is an abundance of willing Vassals due to rampant poverty, the increasing numbers suffering from mutations and disease, and the pitiful conditions lived in by even those in the outer cities. Where there is such despair, any hope is not to be ignored and an outstretched hand, even if covered with the blood of your own kind, is not something you will risk refusing. It may be the Vassal's choice that puts him in that situation, but it is the Dravani's considerable presence of mind that keeps them there. The longer they are in the presence of their Dravani masters and under their influence, the less free will they have, continuing until they are but a shadow of their former selves. In close proximity to a Dravani, the Vassal's own will can be completely overridden, showing no regard for its personal safety and continuing on unflinchingly even after sustaining injuries that would kill a normal man. The Dravani have many categories of Vassal depending on their usefulness, from the lowly peons to the Executors who carry out their bidding with a certain amount of autonomy and free will, as well as those used exclusively for defense such as the Lektras. For those that fail in their appointed tasks, a quick death awaits them if they are lucky and if not, there is always the ranks of the Damned. But as long as there are those that put themselves first over any others in the universe, the Dravani will never be short of volunteers to fill their ranks.



EXECUTOR

The primary motivations of the Dravani are food and pleasure, everything else just gets in the way of their having a good time, although many of their ideas of enjoyment would send shudders through the stoutest of men. This is where the Executors come in; these individuals are drawn from the ambitious elite and young, hungry for power and all it can bring, they make a perfect candidate for the particular brand of Dravani persuasion. Once an agreement has been reached, they are elevated quickly to positions of power with all the luxury and debauchery that brings. It is then the Dravani start to reveal themselves, whispering promises of immortality and lordship over their kin. Once within the Dravani's presence and tasting the excess of success, few refuse their Faustian bargain and before they realize it, any humanity or conscience they might have had has been lost. The Executors are unique amongst the vassals, as they operate independently and are trusted to make decisions without constantly having to bother their masters for instructions, although failure or inaction is not tolerated and the price paid for such is terrible indeed. An Executor is always aware that his is a privileged position and there are many eager aspirants waiting to claw their way up and into his 'shoes' to prove themselves worthy of their dark masters.

EXECUTOR DATA

Class: Human

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV
5	1	2	2	2	3

Points: 21 **Armor:** 1

		-1	-2	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

9mm Pistol

Range: 6/14" -2LR **Damage:** 3d6

SMG

Range: 8/16" -2LR **Damage:** 6d6/4d6

Special: Automatic

SKILLS & ABILITIES:

- Conduit

Crew Allowance: Up to 4 per team of Vassals
Independent

WRAITH

Dravani have no need or interest in augmenting their bodies with electronic equipment. The results of experiments conducted with rogue Dravani have proved that not only is the available technology too primitive to boost their already formidable physical prowess, but it inhibits them from using many of their innate abilities, including influencing the minds of others and, most importantly, their ability to shift. The Dravani Wraiths are not as adept at Grid manipulation as others and the Dravani have deduced that this could be due to their influence on the vassals' minds. While making them less quick-minded and free thinking, essential components of the best Grid jockeys and ghosts, they make up for these shortcomings in many other ways, such as a tendency to be less skittish than many Grid users - especially when in the presence of the Dravani. Far too many assignments fall apart due to a crew's resident Grid expert suddenly deciding that hearing the screams of the wounded and dying along with the reality of live weapons' fire is not somewhere they want to be - a Wraith has none of these doubts.

WRAITH DATA

Class: Cyborg

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV	HACK
5	1	1	2	2	2	2

Points: 19 **Armor:** 1

		-1	-2	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

9mm Pistol

Range: 6/14" -2LR **Damage:** 3d6

Remote Board

Range: 12”

SMG

Range: 8/16" -2LR **Damage:** 6d6/4d6

Special: Automatic

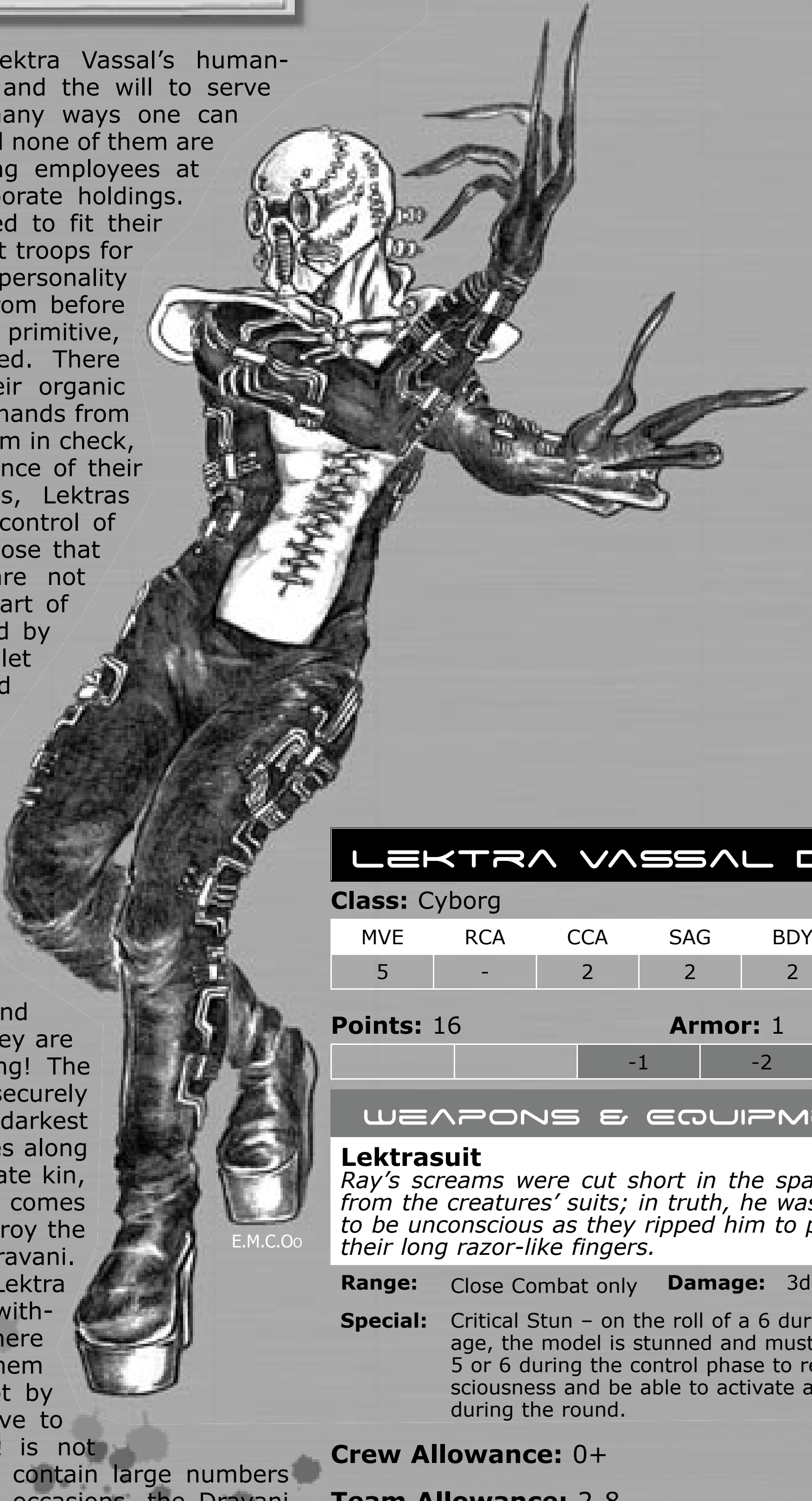
SKILLS & ABILITIES:

- Sneak

Crew Allowance: 0-2
Independent

LEKTRA VASSAL

Nothing remains of a Lektra Vassal's humanity except primal instinct and the will to serve its masters. There are many ways one can become a Lektra Vassal and none of them are voluntary, such as plucking employees at random from various corporate holdings. The Lektras are augmented to fit their new roll as frontline assault troops for the Dravani and whatever personality they may have retained from before is brutally expunged, while primitive, violent urges are amplified. There is still enough left of their organic brain to receive basic commands from nearby Dravani to keep them in check, but when not in the presence of their masters' silent commands, Lektras are completely under the control of their baser instincts. As those that become Lektra Vassals are not necessarily trained in the art of combat and are considered by some Dravani as feral bullet blockers, Grimalkin designed their suits to house a small, but powerful electric generator so that when the Lektra hits with sufficient force, a powerful current is discharged through an exposed network of interlaced wiring. Most opponents are stunned instantly and so the rest of the Lektra Vassal team fall on them and rip them to pieces while they are unconscious and unresisting! The Lektra Vassals are kept securely under lock and key in the darkest recesses of Dravani facilities along with their even less fortunate kin, the Damned, until the call comes to bring them forth to destroy the earthly enemies of the Dravani. Both the Damned and the Lektra Vassals are used mainly within Dravani complexes where there is no chance of them being spotted, at least not by anyone who is going to live to tell about it. However, it is not unknown for incursions to contain large numbers of both, although on such occasions, the Dravani operate on a complete annihilation agenda for their opposition.



LEKTRA VASSAL DATA

Class: Cyborg

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV
5	-	2	2	2	2

Points: 16 **Armor:** 1

		-1	-2	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

Lektrasuit

Ray's screams were cut short in the sparking light from the creatures' suits; in truth, he was fortunate to be unconscious as they ripped him to pieces with their long razor-like fingers.

Range: Close Combat only **Damage:** 3d6

Special: Critical Stun – on the roll of a 6 during damage, the model is stunned and must roll a 4, 5 or 6 during the control phase to regain consciousness and be able to activate as normal during the round.

Crew Allowance: 0+

Team Allowance: 2-8

THE DAMNED (VASSAL)

The Dravani, though they fear death, do not see it as punishment, but rather as a release. It is far worse to endure and suffer that which fate has bestowed upon you, which is the underlying thought behind the Damned. For those that fail them, betray them or go against them in any way, it is better to die than go under the blades of the Baggers to become one of the Damned. Once any information has been extracted from these unfortunates - from failed Executors to a wounded Ronin found within one of their facilities, they are turned over to the Baggers. For days they will be 'played with', toyed and teased until their minds have snapped and all they wish for is the sweet release of the grave. It is at this stage they are returned to the nearest Dravani facility, where they are subjected to the final part of their metamorphosis. Once within the labs, they undergo a similar surgery to the Lektras, making them compliant to the will of the Dravani and boosting their aggression. Even after the extensive surgery, the Damned are left with their consciousness and, often realizing what they have become, they will throw themselves in harm's way in a desperate attempt to end their suffering. For those that get to face them, the horror and disgust are almost overwhelming. There are stories that occasionally surface on the Grid of assignments where a crew has run across these deformed and twisted creatures, and to their horror they find themselves staring into the pitiful eyes of an ex-comrade crying for release. Although these stories add to the myth surrounding the Ronin and make for good reading on a dark night, most see them as just that - stories and myth.

THE DAMNED (VASSAL) DATA

Class: Human

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV
4	-	2	1	4	4

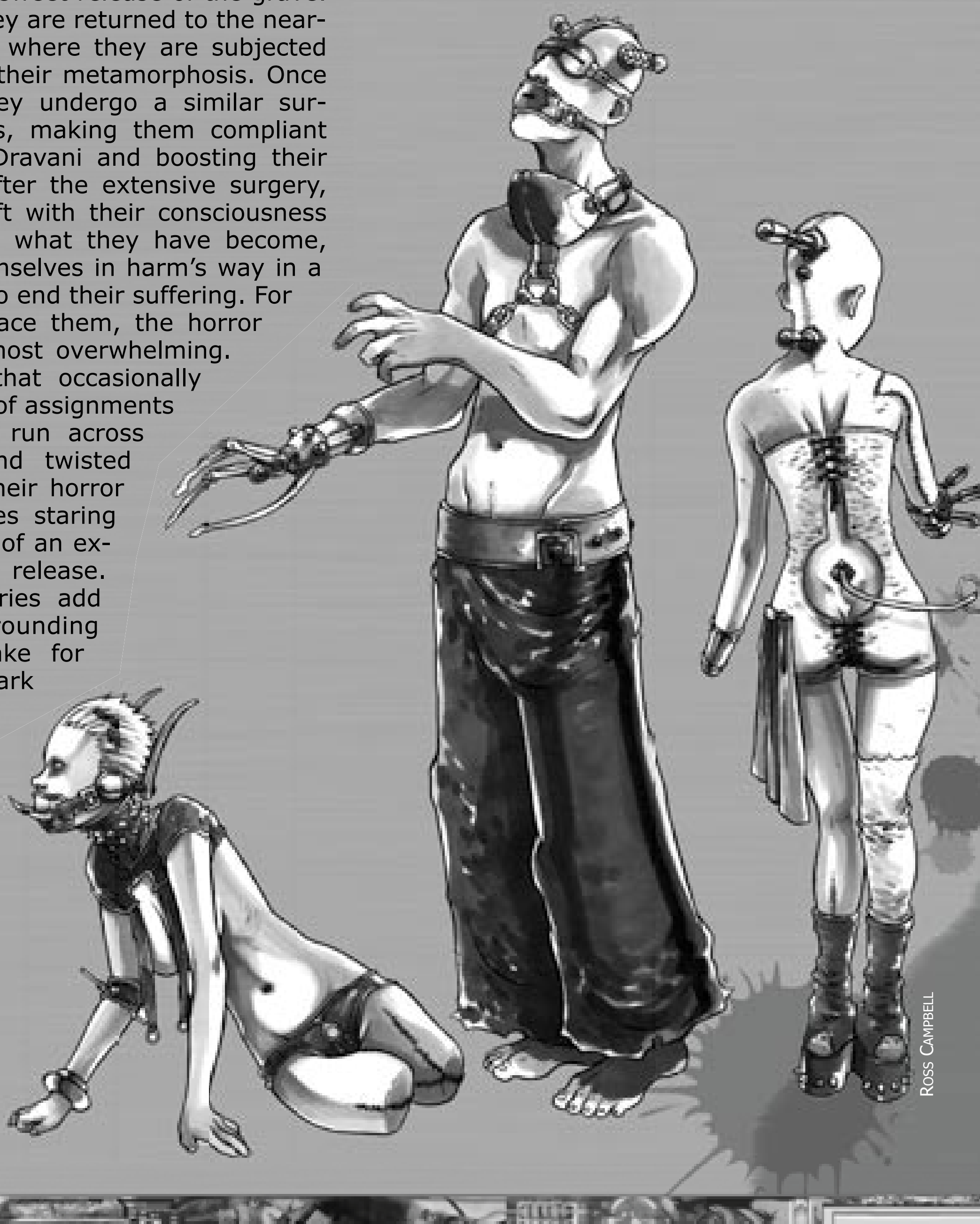
Points: 8

			-1	-1	D

SKILLS & ABILITIES:

- Horrific
- Shrug-it-off

Crew Allowance: 0-1 team per Bagger team
Team Allowance: 4-6



SOULESS

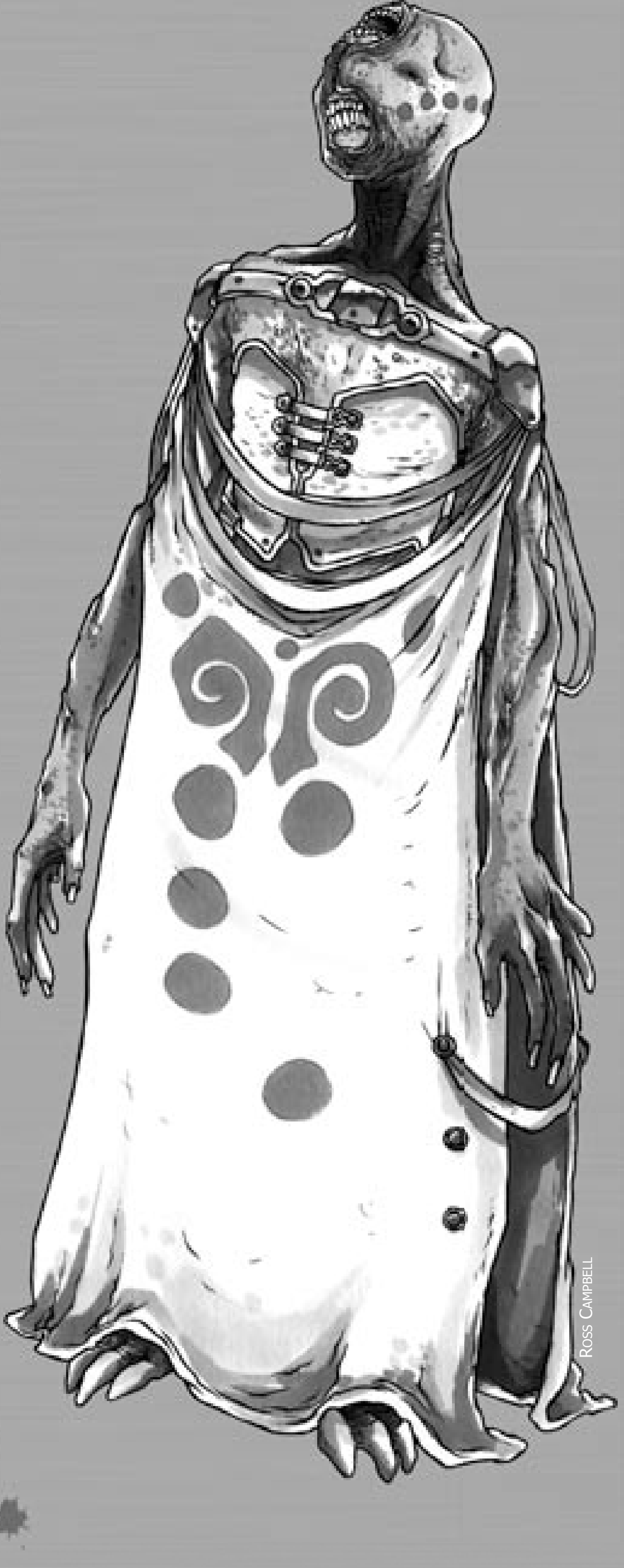
"The maw is once more opening; these days are but the beginning of the end. For this is how it has always been and it has always been."

– Ashitur on the eve of the Dravani flight from Eird

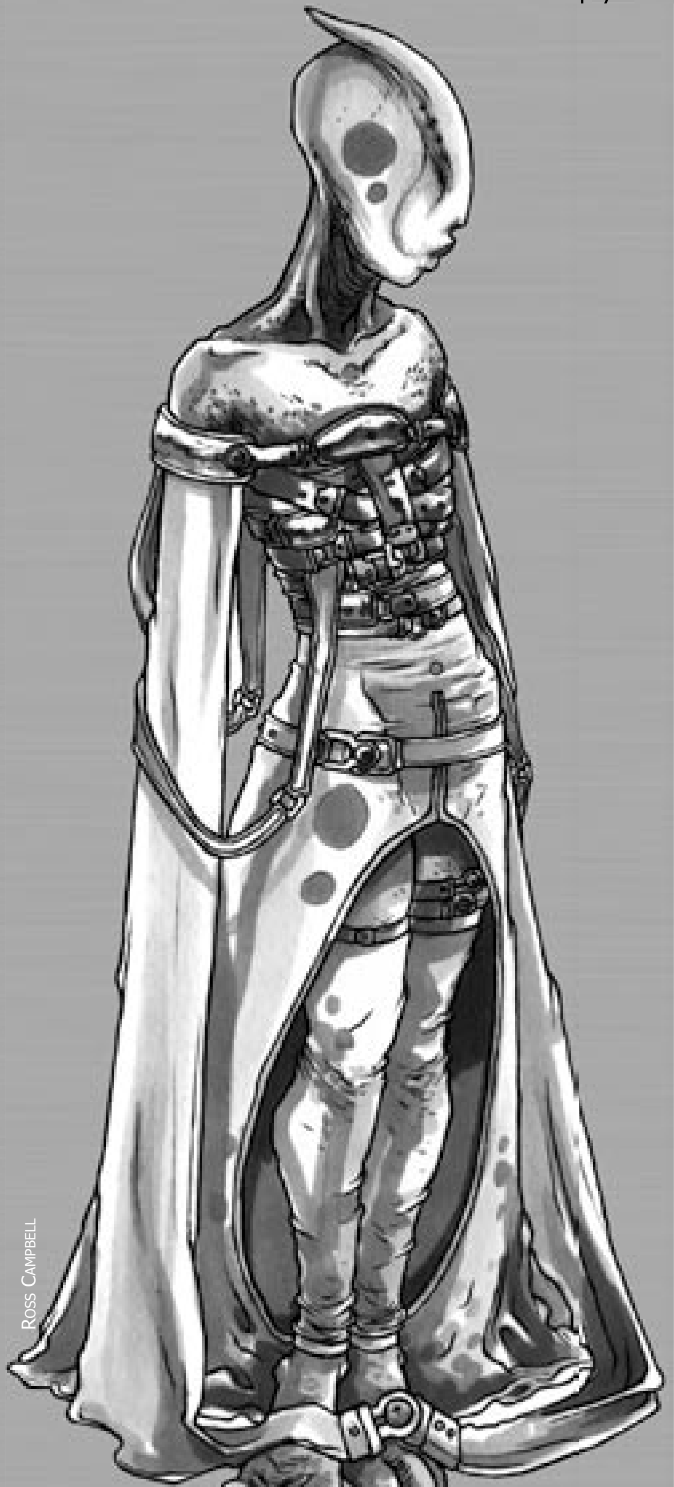
A millennia ago, a Dravani patrol cruiser came across a small sparsely populated planet with beings numbering only in their thousands spread in settlements across the isolated world. The Dravani commander made the fateful decision that day to forgo their usual procedures of slow infiltration and decided to take the planet alone and by force. The agrarian natives would not stand a chance against the hundreds of Dravani on board who were clamoring for sport after being confined to their cold cryo-tombs. It started exactly as they had envisioned, in fact even easier, as within days the indigenous species was no more. The Dravani lay basking, bloated, under the twin moons, marveling at their superiority.

An Ossuary transport, knocked out of normal shipping lanes by a nav malfunction, picked up a faint distress signal emanating from a backward planet at the edge of their known space. The transponder codes were quickly matched to that of a missing Dravani cruiser from some half a century earlier that had disappeared on a fringe patrol. The planet was inhabited by a small colony of sentient life with fewer than a hundred essences in all. It was only during a re-analysis of the scan data that they realized the essences were Dravani, but not as they knew them. The survivors were hazy and all had large chunks of their memories missing, but certain areas of their story were consistent - the race they had fed on were as poison to them and those few that survived the sickness were changed, mutated beyond measure. The court was eager to learn more of this race so as to avoid such beings in the future and many expeditions were sent to the planet. The only additional information found was that the species were not natives, they themselves being descendants of a scout ship that had crashed eons earlier. From their remains it was determined that they had been heavily manipulated at a cellular level far beyond the capability of Dravani science.

After learning everything that could be learnt from the survivors, the court had to make a decision. Its first impulse was to eradicate them all and wipe out this ugly blemish on Dravani society, but it was then put forward that they should be allowed to live. Each colony should have a 'souless' as they had become known, as a reminder of their folly and an example of what could happen if you do not follow the orders of the court. Over the years their numbers have grown,



the genetic mutations passing down from one generation to the next. Of all the Dravani, the Souless are the most humble, for they were the first to learn that there are more powerful things in the universe than themselves. Over the centuries there arose prophecies from within their ranks about a coming darkness that would sweep all before it. At first the Dravani laughed and said they would "welcome the darkness as a brother" - to which the Souless would reply "the gulf has no kin." Their enclaves became even more isolated as they turned towards meditation and seeking the truth from visions, and most were glad at this, as the Souless were there to be an example not to preach to them about the error of their ways and spread tales of their encroaching doom. Even some of the ancients declared they had made a mistake in not exterminating them when they were first returned.



Grimalkin had been one of the few Dravani that had patience for the Souless and, if the truth be known, he preferred their company to many of the court families. While many would not even have bothered to warn the Souless, he personally went to their shrine, which he had allowed to be built in his grounds, and brought them to his cruiser when the Enemy came. Life on Earth presented some unique challenges for the Souless and without Grimalkin's help and support their small enclave would probably never have survived the first fifty years; for without the ability to shape themselves, there was no disguising their monstrous form from the superstitious eyes of humanity. Here on Earth, they are even more isolated from Dravani society, becoming almost as leper priests to the surviving aristocracy, who somehow blame them for their misfortune and see them as cursed and harbingers of misfortune. Grimalkin has never been one to pay too much attention to the opinions of others and finds the Souless far pleasanter company, as well as very useful operatives.

SOULESS DATA

Class: Alien

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV
6	-	3	2	4	5

Points: 39

				-1	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

Claws

The yellow hooks on the ends of their slim fingers gouged chunks of meat from his face and then he stopped screaming and slowly withered away before my very eyes.

Range: Close Combat only **Damage:** 2d6

SKILLS & ABILITIES:

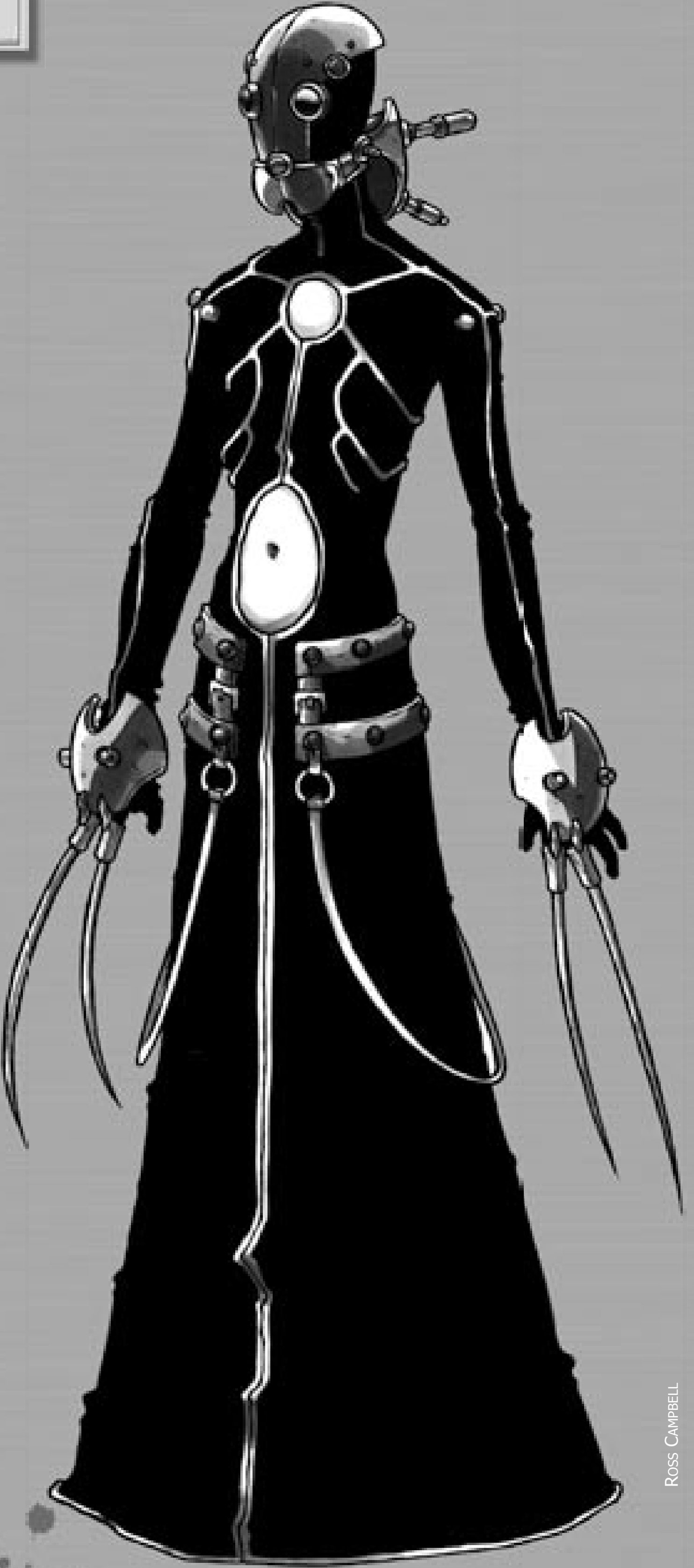
- Drain
- Horrific
- Smoke
- Feed
- Presence
- Swift

Crew Allowance: 0-6

Independent

BAGGERS

For those of the Bagger sect, immortality has bred boredom tempered by sadism; on Earth, where they are reduced to disguising themselves and hiding from an 'inferior' species, this has brought them to new levels of depravity and brutality to compensate. Originally only open to the elite and, of course, twisted members of higher Dravani society, the Baggers have opened their doors somewhat wider since their internment on Earth under Melisandra's constant supervision. Before Earth, the sect granted her power and fulfilled her perverted and sadistic needs so that, even amongst everyday Dravani, they were rightly feared. Many vocal doubters and non-believers of the chosen path of the Dravani fell under a Bagger's razor blades in the shadowed halls of their inner temples. They were now under Grimalkin's authority and he had little or no use for them and they certainly had no influence over him. Melisandra still persevered, biding her time and slowly recruiting more Baggers, until during the 21st century her position had grown in power. Mutation was quite prevalent amongst those that chose to live outside of Grimalkin's 'personal protection' and Melisandra believed she had found the answer. An ancient Bagger ritual involved transplanting a victim's organs into the supplicant Bagger, where the Dravani system would then absorb it into its own; the ritual was carried out without any anesthesia and while the victim was still alive. They believed this gift of pain was one of the most exquisite they could visit on a being, but Melisandra had discovered a new use for it. By actually replacing the diseased and worn out organs with fresh ones, they could keep the infected alive indefinitely. Grimalkin banned this procedure, pointing out that the trail of bodies would eventually lead to their door and there were only so many bribes and so many deaths that could be carried out without giving themselves away. For over two years, their disagreement took them over the globe as they played a deadly game of cat and mouse, finally ending in an almost disastrous showdown in Calcutta, where both sides took heavy losses. An agreement was finally reached in Nepal a short time later and the Baggers were finally 'reborn' into Earth's Dravani culture. They were no longer allowed to continue their excessive harvesting, but they were permitted to keep their rituals and status, as well as becoming the guardians of



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those unfortunate enough to succumb to mutation. With the lack of any organized Dravani military, Grimalkin also pressed service upon them so that whenever their people needed them they would come. Although Melisandra initially resisted, secretly she welcomed this as another reliance Grimalkin would have upon her, which would again raise her and her sect in the eyes of the people.

BAGGERS DATA

Class: Alien

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV
5	2	3	3	4	4

Points: 38 **Armor:** 3

				-1	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

Surgical Tools

As its fingers jangled, ghostly reflections flew off its silvered digits. I couldn't tell what most of the instruments were or what they did, but I did know that they could carve through a man as a knife through butter.

Range: Close Combat only **Damage:** 4d6 P1

Special: Model receives additional damage dice on the damage rolls of a 5 or 5, instead of just the usual 6.

Hypo-Gun

His eyes rolled back into his head as they descended upon him. I could not be certain of his final fate, but no one can loose that much blood and live.

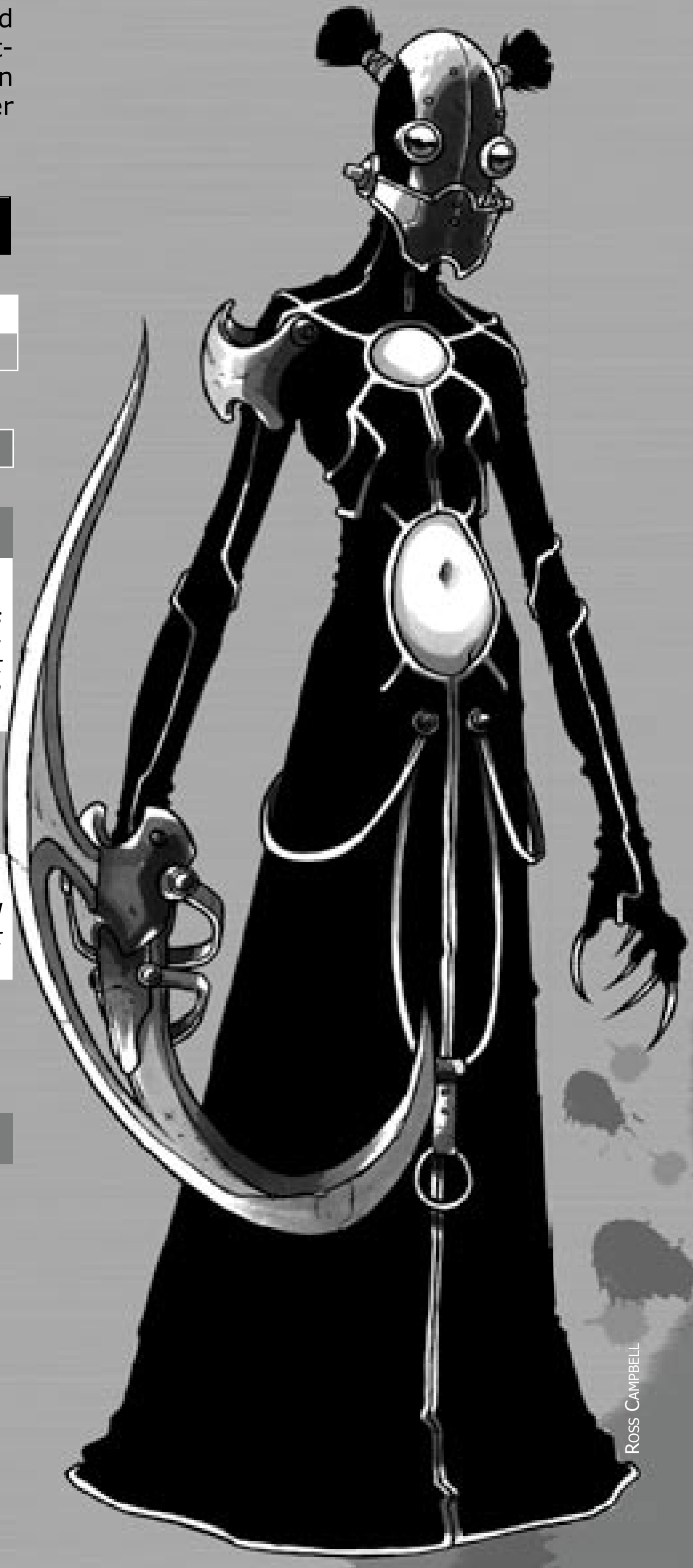
Range: 6" **Damage:** 3d6

Special: Stun - on successfully damaging a model, it must roll under its BDY on 1d6 or become stunned. Has no effect on robots or cyborgs.

SKILLS & ABILITIES:

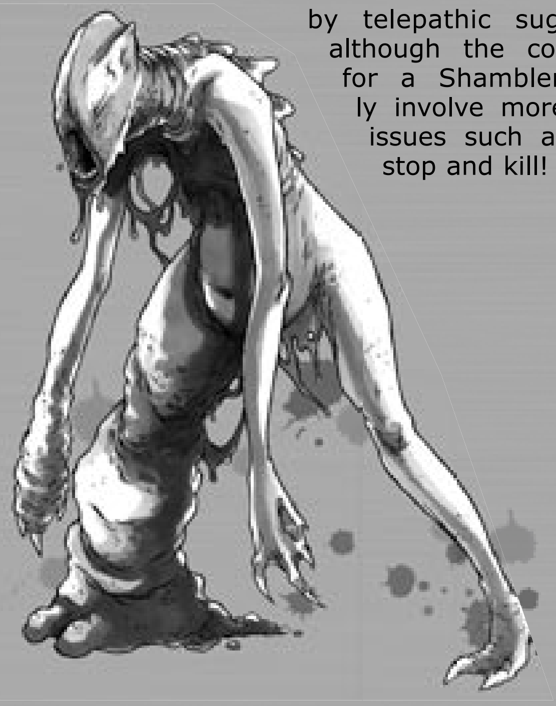
- Feed
- Presence
- Sufferance
- Horrific
- Regenerate

Crew Allowance: 0-3
Team Allowance: 4-8



SHAMBLERS

Born out of exposure to the solar radiation that now seeps through the polluted skies and to the toxins that fill the air outside of the safety of the corporate arcologies and domed cities, the Shamblers are literally melting, their skin sloughing from their bones. Once they were as other Dravani, proud and arrogant, but now they are drooling mounds of decaying flesh, driven insane by pain; their only desires for death or to inflict their suffering on others. Originally the others were fearful of these abominations and were concerned that they would destroy their elaborate subterfuge and reveal the Dravani in the harsh spotlight of human eyes. An extensive campaign to eliminate them was started, but because of Melisandra they survived and more have joined their folds. The oldest Shambler in now almost one hundred years old and, even though they have lost many of their former traits, given the right conditions and sustenance their kind survive. Although all of a Shambler's time is borrowed due to the massive cellular damage, if it was not for the virulent Dravani biology with its refusal to know when it is time to die, they would not survive at all. The captured ones now exist in pens deep beneath Dravani enclaves, below even the Damned and Lektra Vassals as they wait to be called. Being immune to almost any physical punishment and driven insane by rage and uncontrollable pain, they have become an essential part of Dravani forces; they form a living, killing shield-wall that, though slow, marches implacably forward, decimating all before it. There is just enough of an intelligence left for the Dravani to direct them by telepathic suggestion, although the commands for a Shambler usually involve more simple issues such as move, stop and kill!



SHAMBLERS DATA

Class: Alien

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV
6	-	3	1	4	5

Points: 23 **Armor:** 2

						-1	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

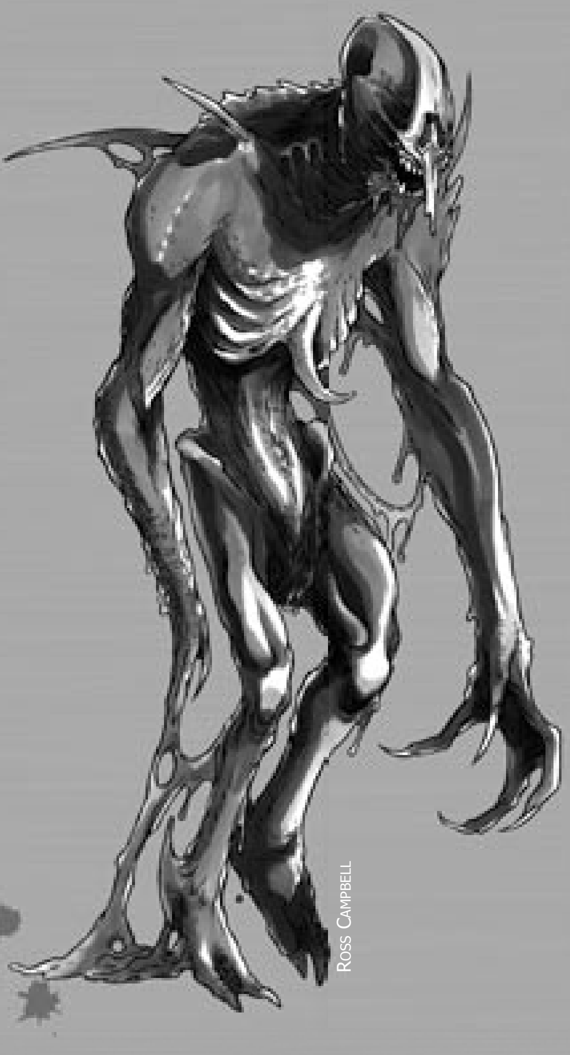
Claws
The yellow hooks on the ends of their slim fingers gouged chunks of meat from his face and then he stopped screaming and slowly withered away before my very eyes.

Range: Close Combat only **Damage:** 2d6

SKILLS & ABILITIES:

- Horrific
- Shrug-it-Off
- Ponderous
- Will of Iron

Crew Allowance: 0-2
Team Allowance: 4-10



BRIDES OF LILITH

As Eird was a farm planet in a non-strategic sector, they had little in the form of military strength situated there when the Enemy attacked. It is probably this that enabled Grimalkin and the others to escape as compared to the rest of the central Dravani system Eird was basically ignored. Dravani military tactics are mainly based around stealth and infiltration, but that is not to say they do not have the capabilities to pulverize the opposition in a straight-up fight. In fact, the Dravani Martial caste is known for being almost unstoppable and marching implacably into what most races would deem as a no-win situation and emerging as the victor. They are also particularly feared for their brutality and lack of respect for life including other portions of Dravani society. No matter how many times Grimalkin may have wished for their services, he knew he was in a better position without them, for he is in no doubt that they would have sided with the aristocracy until the time was right for them to take control. However, the stranded Dravani were not completely without protection as Lilith always traveled with a compliment of her personal guard, as did many of the nobility. Although mainly seen as ceremonial pomp by those not of the blood, these personal elite guards were some of the deadliest close-quarter fighters the Dravani possessed and were bonded to protect their charges. Grimalkin slaughtered many of the Brides, a feat he could only have accompanied with the help of the Souless, and fewer than ten are now left in Lilith's service, where they obey their mistress's command and hold back. Grimalkin is aware of their deep-seated hatred of him, but would rather be in possession of this knowledge than be ignorant of their deadly intentions. Aware of their uses, he was upset that so many had to be killed when their race is in such a delicate position on Earth, but an example had to made and there was no better affirmation of power for the Dravani people than by decimating the Brides of Lilith. With events coming to a head, Grimalkin must call on their services more than ever; he knows exposure of their presence cannot be far off and man's meddling in Alpha Centauri may bring unwanted attention to this small blue orb in the back-end of space. The Brides must, therefore, operate as his shock troops whether either party likes it or not, for it is a rare being that can stand toe to toe with a Bride and live to tell the tale, regardless of any hopes of victory.

BRIDES OF LILITH DATA

Class: Alien

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV
6	-	4	4	4	4

Points: 74 **Armor:** 1

				-2	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

Blades of Intuneric
Each Bride, on passing out of the Academy, was issued blades forged by the master-smith deep within the bowels of their home-world Intuneric.

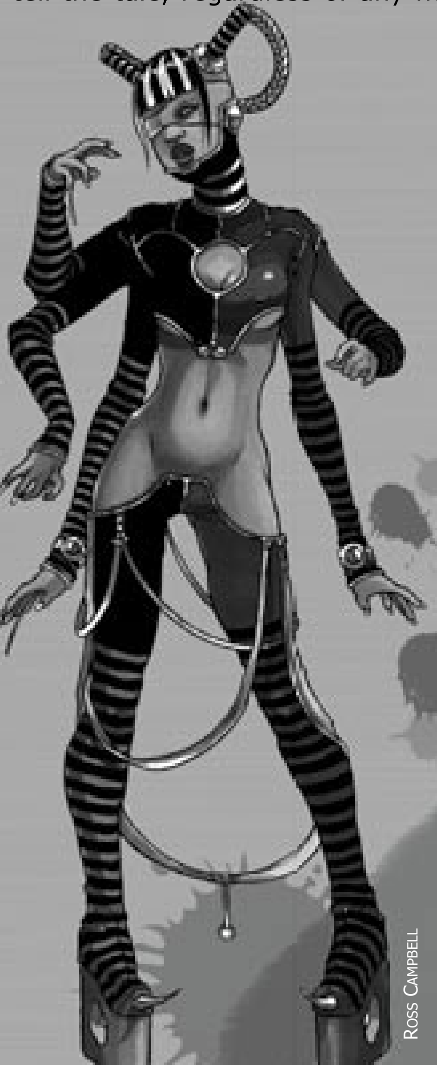
Range: Close Combat only **Damage:** 5d6

Special: Parry - model may add +2 to their CCA score in close combat, but if their score is greater than their opponent they do no damage and the combat is considered a draw.

SKILLS & ABILITIES:

- Dervish
- Regenerate
- Sufferance
- Twitch
- Feed
- Shrug-it-Off
- Swift

Crew Allowance: 0-3
Independent



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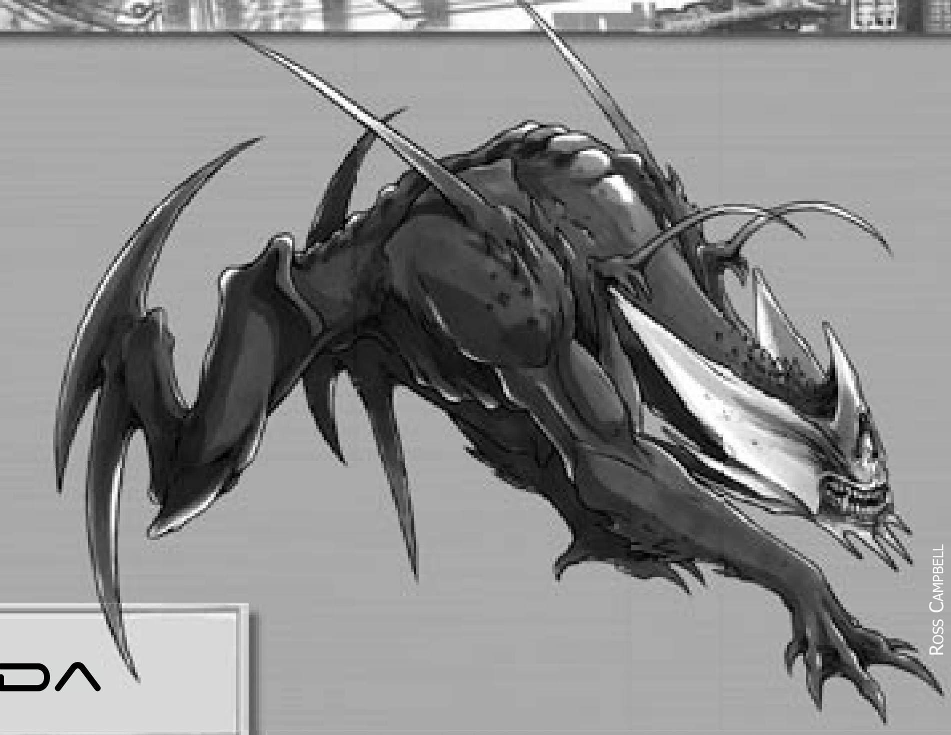

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VOLKODA

One of the few reminders of their homeworld, Intuneric, that the Dravani took with them around the galaxy were the Volkoda. Quite domesticated compared to the wild varieties found in the forest and mountains of their home, the Volkoda in Dravani captivity are far from pets. Separated from their mother after their first week of life, they are then cared for and fed by a Dravani trainer; this has been found to be a vital part of the training process as they come to look on the Dravani as part of their pack rather than another potential food source. The Volkoda, like most of the other species on Intuneric, is a voracious predator and is terrifyingly fast over short distances, exceeding even the speed of the now extinct cheetah from Earth's past. Once it has caught its prey, its jaws literally lock onto it by means of a groove in its jawbone. When it has secured the creature in its massive maw, small hook arms on the Volkoda's back are released and the muscle pulled taunt, which acts like a catapult swinging them forward at an incredible velocity. For smaller creatures, this usually means instant death as they are impaled on the spike-like appendages; for larger victims, it enables the Volkoda to stay firmly latched onto them while it tears them to pieces between its razor-sharp fangs. A few Volkoda were stored safely aboard the ship and were carefully hidden and nurtured as a breeding program was quickly started; they were seen as the perfect guards and protectors while the Dravani became accustomed to this strange new world. There were a few accidents in the early years where a Volkoda would escape its compound and slaughter a number of locals, but fortunately superstition was rife and stories of monstrous beasts were more a cause for people to bolt their doors than organize a hunting party.

VOLKODA DATA

Class: Beast

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV
8	-	3	4	4	4

Points: 32

Armor: 2

			-1	-2	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

Teeth & Claws
Its claws were fearsome, but what really terrified me were its gnashing teeth and the fetid stink of sweet meat that issued from its jaws.

Range: Close Combat only **Damage:** 4d6

SKILLS & ABILITIES:

- Gnaw
- Scout
- Horrific
- Shrug-it-Off

Crew Allowance: 0-2
Team Allowance: 2-4

NIGHT SHIFT

"I take it from your call that they have, arrived."

"Yes, Patrician, but there has been an unexpected development."

Matroy turned and looked at the human, the Executor averted his eyes as the gaze of his 'god' fell upon him.

"Look upon me, Tremane, what do you know?"

Tremane looked up into the vacant holes that he presumed were the eyes of the Souless; he could never get used to their presence. Although they were as powerful and immortal as the others, whereas they were beauty incarnate and he could lose himself just staring at their perfect forms, he could barely look at a Souless without a deep feeling of revulsion running through him.

"The APAC crew arrived as our informant said, but they were being followed. A lone marshal."

"This is not such a problem, but I thought our friend usually advised us of Unipol activity well in advance?"

"She just contacted me before I requested your presence, sire. She alerted me that a full CSO crew has also been deployed. She did not even know of this other marshal" Tremane felt as if the light and air was being sucked from the room as the Souless' gaze burned into him, its anger tangible, cloying at his senses.

"How is this happening? Our facilities are meant to be off limits to them."

"It's the marshals, my Lord. Though they are meant to be the supreme representative of the law, they often have scant regard for the letter of it. But there is some good news to this, Patrician, she did inform me that the party was unauthorized and had tried to cover its tracks, but she noticed the code displacements and contacted us immediately."

"That is good news. So no one knows where they have gone and let's hope know one will miss them, at least for a while. Have her purge all evidence of their exit correctly."

"Already done, my Lord."

"Good. Then clear the floors of all personnel and seal all sections. Block all outgoing communications, but keep their coms live to belay suspicion until the last moments. Open containment areas 13 to 22 and funnel them through. I will join them and deal with this myself."

"Yes, my…" As Tremane turned to answer, he found he was talking only to himself. The air suddenly felt warmer, cleaner somehow, though he knew this was impossible as the air was continually reprocessed and kept at a constant comfortable temperature by the pyramid's environmental controls. Still, the chill had passed.

Matroy swam in the shadows, mere feet from the intruders, undetectable even to their sensors. He was so close he could almost breathe in their life force; it was vibrant, spiked with adrenaline, flickers of fear sending dark ripples through the phosphorescent hues. They had overcome the door and were moving through, one member of the party acting as a rearguard, staying and covering the corridor. This is good, good, he thought. Reaching out, Matroy touched his mind. The man instantly assumed a combat pose, leveled his weapon, and moved back towards the corridor. This was all the space Matroy needed and, flowing with the shadows, he solidified behind him and hit the release on the door before fading through the wall. The man spun around, his finger depressing the trigger on his weapon and a spray of bullets whizzed harmlessly off the sealed door. Matroy watched as the human rushed to the panel and beat uselessly against it, but the door remained firmly shut. He was now desperately trying to call his comrades, the panic rising in his voice as only static greeted his garbled words. Matroy watched as the yellows and oranges faded to blues and purples as the fear rose and, moving silently behind, he allowed his long fingers to brush against the man's neck. Yet again the man spun around, bullets spraying the empty corridor, cold sweat soaking his skin. Matroy watched as his aura flickered black – perfect, he thought, as he struck from behind.

The long hands of the Souless closed around the trooper's head, lifting him off the ground, his legs kicking helplessly at the air. His fingers convulsed on the trigger once more, sending a last burst of bullets around the corridor and into Matroy's leg. But the Souless did not even flinch; he was too enraptured as he drained the man's life from him. The trooper's flesh began to tighten as if the weight of a thousand years had suddenly been unleashed upon him; a brief sigh of pleasure escaped from Matroys lips as a last gasp for air came from his victim. He let the body fall to the floor, where it instantly crumbled, leaving only clothes and a piles of dark dust to mark the man's passing.

Matroy looked down at his leg; the flesh ran like liquid where there had been the open wound, spitting out the twisted metal slugs before it sealed, leaving no evidence of the injury. Enough enjoyment, he thought, my forces should be closing with the others. It was going to be an entertaining night after all.

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To look at their present impact on everyday life, one would not believe the modest beginnings that spawned the interplanetary juggernaut that is Asia Pacific. The interplanetary corporation called Asia Pacific Inc. began as a small conglomerate of manufacturing companies in the mid 20th century, but the real origins of the company stretch much further back into the 15th century in the feudal Japanese Empire. In order to understand the unique manner in which Asia Pacific (APAC) operates, one must trace its path back to the Yoshino samurai family of the 1400s.

The Yoshino were a prominent and well-respected samurai clan, close to the Emperor and the Shogunate during much of Japanese imperial history. Known to be reasonable and levelheaded by the prominent families, the Yoshino were often arbitrators and ambassadors, and their moderate stance on many issues helped to maintain peace throughout a large number of volatile incidents. Although wealthy and in possession of a strong military, the Yoshino rarely brought their wealth or martial might to bear directly against others, preferring to allow them to fight amongst themselves and then reap the benefits of the chaos. Several potentially large-scale conflicts were resolved without war simply because neither side of an argument could count on the Yoshino to take one side or the other. Their decision to join in either camp of a nationwide conflict could likely swing the balance of victory from one side to the other. The samurai family's wealth and influence lasted largely intact throughout all the upheaval of the following centuries, as the Yoshino continued to value moderation and reason over rash acts of principle or conviction.

When the first bandits began to group together into the beginnings of the yakuza, the Yoshino played a covert role in their development. As the organization grew, they were some of the first to institute the oyabun-kobun relationship, offering the lure of samurai-like honor to peasants who swore their fealty. The oyabun were always agents of the Yoshino, planted into the villages as merchants to coax the other commoners into action against the roving Ronin who were such a destructive force during the Tokugawa era of Japan. They also ensured that the merchants and rising middle classes were maintained under their control. Many successful artisans and traders owed their initial success to the Yoshino and thus remained in a debt of honor throughout their lives.

Seeing that the days of the landowning samurai noble were fading, the modest family did their best to diversify into fields that showed potential for growth and solidarity. They proved as adept at business as they were at politics for, in truth, managing a company bears many similarities to operating and overseeing an estate, which the samurai had done for centuries. Their lingering nobility gave them leverage in the world of politics, while their growing economic power allowed them to infiltrate and ultimately control the Sumitomo zaibatsu as corporate interests began to permeate Japan. Their multiple clandestine affiliations afforded them an incredible degree of influence and their tendency to only maintain, never exploit, this influence allowed it to go unchecked year after year. The political ties of the Yoshino helped them gain many concessions for their business interests and, along with their yakuza influence, was a useful tool against competitors and political rivals alike. All of these tools combined to make the Yoshino family become one of the most quietly wealthy families in all of Japan.

It was primarily during this period that the Yoshino family started to extend its influence throughout East Asia. Whilst Japan itself was closing its borders and restricting the access of foreign nationals, the Yoshino family used its contacts within the elite criminal classes and its influence at Court to gain help infiltrating agents throughout the major political factions within the turbulent Far East. Quietly working behind the scenes, as well as by careful negotiation, the family insured that it was playing both sides in every major conflict. Usually using yakuza on one side and more respectable agents on the other, they could always guarantee to be supporting the victors.

It came as no great surprise after having spent almost 150 years working behind the scenes, that the Yoshino were largely responsible for the opening of the borders in 1853 when Commodore Perry arrived with the Americas request for favorable terms and a base of operations in East Asia.

This renewed their influence throughout the area and the family continued to play a subtle part in the following years of east/west conflict.

While the merchants and agents that owed fealty to the Yoshino could be found in all the major European trade houses and enclaves, their underground and slightly less acceptable associates were supplying weapons and ammunition to various rebel insurgents and revolutionaries. A classic example being the European naval troops that died in Beijing whilst defending their stockades, many of which contained Yoshino retainers. The Boxers who attacked were armed with weapons supplied by the yakuza under the instructions of the Yoshino Family. This state of affairs continued unabated throughout the collapse of the samurai and quite literally up to the start of the Second World War.

During the rebuilding of the Japanese infrastructure after World War II, the Yoshino used a variety of shell corporations and proxies to purchase much of the manufacturing and industrial complexes left almost bankrupted after the war. The family also remained careful to maintain its influence outside Japan, assisting warlords and nationalists in Manchuria, as well as playing all sides in the Chinese revolution, thus being one of the major influences in Mao Zedong's Cultural Revolution.

In the early 1950s, Asia Pacific Inc. came into existence. At first simply a conglomerate of electronics and manufacturing companies, Asia Pacific gradually expanded, 'buying' one after another of the remaining Yoshino-controlled businesses and grouping them all together under the Asia Pacific name. They expanded into engineering and distribution, engulfing one small corporation after another and using their political and syndicate influence to assist the slow, but deliberate growth of the monolithic corporation.

As the 20th century drew to a close, APAC began to spread its interests into all fields of business likely to yield a profit. Instead of focusing largely on support industries for their manufacturing wing, they began researching and purchasing financial institutions, agricultural companies, pharmaceutical corporations and a variety of other businesses they considered likely to be profitable. They began to form a truly diversified corporate entity that was clearly the dominant economic force in East Asia. Greatly aided by its influence throughout Asia, it had enabled China to accept capitalism and thus insured an almost inexhaustible supply of cheap labor.

In the early decades of the 21st century, Asia Pacific was forced to spend a large quantity of its resources defending itself against, seemingly, the whole world at large. The Religious Wars, the rising of the seas, and the global chaos that ensued, cost the company almost as much money as it produced. While much of the military hardware produced for the war was churned out of Asia Pacific factories, much of the fighting also affected their installations and centers of influence. In addition, many key locations in their corporate empire had to be relocated in order to keep them safe from the encroaching seas.

In 2051, Asia Pacific stepped into the forefront of the world's attention by purchasing the United States' Moonbase project from the almost-bankrupt nation. After a short period of restructuring, they relaunched development of Serenity City, making it available to any citizen of the world who could afford to buy a piece of the future. The swarming masses of wealthy Earth-dwellers clamoring for a new homestead on Luna flushed an exorbitant amount of new wealth into Asia Pacific, enough to immediately pay back all of the expenditure for finishing the project and fund the beginning of even more ambitious undertakings. Serenity City also represented a chance for the struggling states of East Asia such as Korea, Thailand and Mongolia to at least have some stake in the world's space-bound future. The income from Serenity City was funneled directly into the Lunar Launch, a catapult launch station that was designed to be the primary staging point for deeper-space exploration.

The very next year proved to be one of the most dramatic in the history of Asia Pacific and indeed for any corporation. The Mexico City Standoff, as it is now known, was the first direct conflict between national governments and multinational corporations, and very nearly spelled the end of not only corporate power, but also the entire civilized world. When UN troops raided the Xenone testing facility in Mexico City, every megacorporation realized that the event was momentous. It was a line in the sand, a Rubicon that must not be crossed. With cold and businesslike efficiency, Asia Pacific threw its lot in with the rest of the major corporations and almost became a co-ruler of the world. But, because of General Hammond's reckless bravery, Asia Pacific became instead one of the original signatory members of the Heiwa Accord, ostensibly bowing to the authority of Unipol and the CSO.

In the aftermath of the MC Standoff and the Heiwa Accord, Asia Pacific continued with its business as it had for hundreds of years, weathering the upheaval with skill and aplomb. With the Lunar Launch Slingshot at Serenity City now completed, further deep-space missions were being fast-tracked by any group who could afford the use of the "Double-L." In less than a year, humanity had made its first manned landing on the Red Planet and hailed the beginning of a new era of expansion and colonization. Countless credits poured into Asia Pacific's coffers from the new boom in space travel and it continued its slow, but inexorable, growth and expansion.

Asia Pacific's centuries-old integration of political influence and economic power bore the ripest, sweetest fruit possible in the year 2072 which saw possibly the biggest milestone ever for a corporation. In a sweeping simultaneous barrage of contracts and mergers, Asia Pacific assimilated the states of China, Japan, South Korea, Mongolia, Thailand, and the Philippines to become the world's first incorporated state. Asia Pacific, now more commonly known as APAC, was officially a nation as well as a corporation.

Surprisingly enough, due to the hundreds of years of quiet aid and assistance, the incorporated states saw this as a new beginning and received APAC with open arms, rather than treating it as the hostile take-over it was seen as by the rest of the world. This maneuver was immensely costly for APAC as absorbing the national debt of each of its new constituent nations was a significant blow, but another global event was about to emerge that would surprisingly bolster its coffers.

When the virus that came to be known as Pale Horse swept across the world, much of the populace panicked. Thinking that it could be a global killer, a massive percentage of the wealthiest people gathered their riches and their families and moved off-world. The 2078 Stampede Exodus saw 21% of Earth's private wealth move to either Serenity City or one of the new Mars colonies founded by the Commonwealth. A fair percentage would move back in later years, but the transport costs expended during this mad rush of the terrified wealthy elite were astronomical, and Asia Pacific collected a massive portion of those costs. By this time over 65% of all hirable transportation to Mars was owned by Asia Pacific, and their ownership of the Double-L made all travel to the Red Planet immensely profitable for them. Thus, less than ten years after the assimilation of the Oriental nations, Asia Pacific had already recovered all of their debts and gone forward with what they did best - making money!

Asia Pacific invested in and helped to construct most major technologies of the next decades; from the medical equipment invented to combat the symptoms of Pale Horse through the terraforming equipment designed and built to bring atmosphere to Mars, APAC had its fingers in the works and the money flowed.

In 2092 APAC finally completed 500 years of careful planning and, having watched Russia collapse into a pre-feudal wasteland with no real influence or power, they annexed northern Manchuria, Irkutsk, and the Kamchatka Peninsula. In a rare show of direct force and physical influence, they mobilized the corporate national army and simply invaded, wiping out any resistance and welcoming the willing into the fold. Whilst many of the member states of Unipol and several of the world's larger corporations made noisy complaints and protests, very little could actually be done. The CSO had washed its hands of

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the Russian problem almost twenty years previously and as the Russian state did not really exist, almost nobody could see the use or profit in resisting APAC over a part of the world that did not matter.

Just after the successful completion of New New York, into which APAC had invested billions of credits, the old patriarch of Asia Pacific stepped down. Atai Yoshino, mastermind of APAC's incorporated statehood, the construction of the Grid and countless other brilliant economic moves, handed over leadership of the massive corporate juggernaut to his son, Hirumi. His talents would immediately be challenged: not only was his company in the midst of the construction of Market, the largest space station in human history and the first engineered AI mankind had ever created, but another major challenge lay in waiting just around the corner. Less than three years after his appointment as chairman of Asia Pacific, the First Corp War was declared; initially just between Arvunk Enterprises and Havat, soon others took sides. APAC was initially neutral (as always) in the conflict, but became drawn into the fray when one of the combatants launched a brutal offensive against a secretive Asia Pacific research facility in Sydney, Australia. It is largely unclear whether this was an attack provoked by mistaken intelligence or whether one of APAC's rivals was taking an opportunity in the chaos to weaken an enemy. Regardless of the reasons, Hirumi Yoshino was forced to act. He made a rare appearance on the global media networks and issued a statement, calling for peace and declaring that business was not conducted in such a manner. In the ensuing few days, violence subsided and business was resumed as normal. Later that year, however, when a freak weather incident crashed the Arvunk executive jet, APAC was swift to buy up the entire company and strip it into nothingness.

This cold and patient way of doing business would become Hirumi's hallmark for the next forty years, as he out-thought and outmaneuvered corporate rivals through deal after deal, slowly building Asia Pacific into an unassailable monolith of corporate power. Space-travel, electronics and manufacturing were almost totally controlled by the sprawling company, and their wealth was quite literally inestimable. When Hirumi eventually stepped down, he passed the thriving company on to his own son, Takashi. In November of 2071, Takashi Yoshino became the heir to a corporation that could trace its origins back to the samurai aristocracy of the Tokugawa Shogunate, taking the reins of one of humanity's largest companies ever. However, all was not well within the Yoshino clan….

Although Takashi was Hirumi's eldest son, he was not the eldest child. That dubious honor fell to Misumi, his daughter, who felt that she should have inherited the corporate throne. In April of 2172, a freak 'accident' involving an explosion at one of APAC's manufacturing facilities took Takashi's life as he toured the plant and Misumi stepped into the void with relish. After two years, however, her younger brother miraculously reappeared, although significantly changed. His face was concealed behind a Kabuki-style theatrical mask and his damaged left arm was now a cybernetic replacement. He again claimed his place within Asia Pacific, but a civil war had begun. According to the corporation's laws, Takashi is the legal chairman and President of Asia Pacific, but the two years of his absence had allowed Misumi to win many supporters to her side. Only the future will tell if Asia Pacific can weather the internal storm that now brews as they have weathered the storms of the world for over five hundred years.

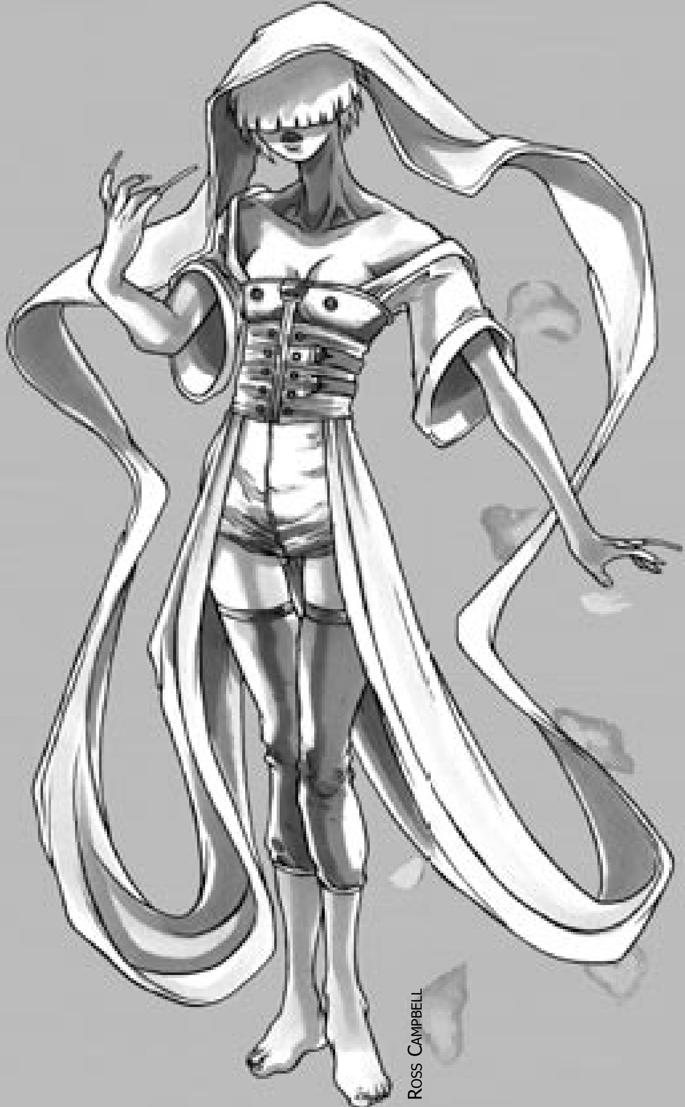
ARASHI: THE STORMS

The Arashi have existed in some form in Japan for centuries; nobody knows exactly how long, but they have been closely associated with the Yoshino family for at least 600 years. While in the past there would only be one or two, during the last century their numbers have increased significantly and it is rumored that the current population is nearer a hundred. Their origins are shrouded in myth, but they are proof that Craft users have existed throughout the ages albeit in far smaller numbers than today, although this proof is only known to the Board and the Arashi themselves. There is one constant in all the stories: there is always a husband and wife who set the example and lead the others. The tales say the Arashi are guardians of the elements; lovers, divided by feuding families who took their own life so they could be together in the spirit world. The gods looked down in pity on the doomed couple and said they would be reborn throughout the ages to help spread unity and help protect others against injustice.

The spiritual element of an Arashi is as much an essential part of them as their incredible powers. An Arashi carries no weapons and wears no modern armor and as leaders of APAC's Special Forces' teams they are truly awe-inspiring to those under their command. Rushing forward into battle, energy crackling around them, those in their crews look upon them as living incarnations of the mythical stories. They see them as a blessing from the spirit realm - their cause is just and they will not fail; no matter if their physical body falls for they will have served a higher cause and helped their people. In honor of their origins, the Arashi are commanded by a husband and wife team and so it still is today. Katsu and Yukiko Yamada are individuals of extraordinary power and charisma, matched only by their loyalty to the Yoshino family. Until recently their dedication to each other was unwavering, but due to recent events in the Yoshino family with the return of Takashi, they have found themselves divided on where their loyalty should lie.

The abilities of the Arashi are derived from the manipulation of the elements, which is unique to them. No other Craft users appear to be able to command and summon the raw powers of nature, certainly not in the West, as all known Arashi are born within the territorial borders of old Japan. Although many Craft users are able to manipulate and create fire, none can control great winds, sleeting rainstorms or even harness the power of lightening like an Arashi. This control can allow them to appear to be flying amidst the gust of a tornado or summoning bolts from the heavens to destroy their enemies. Some Arashi have even managed to wrap themselves in the essence of the storm so that it acts as a physical barrier between them and the outside world. It is partly due to these powers that an Arashi almost never carries weapons, as the last thing that you would want to be carrying when controlling the electrical elements of a storm is a lump of lightening-conducting steel full of explosives. One of the few exceptions to this is Yukiko who is an incredibly gifted swordswoman and has specially crafted swords with insulated handles, so she may use all her abilities in battle; unlike most Arashi, however, her powers focus on the elements of winter.

Whatever their origins, whether as ancient spiritual avenger or new-age mutant, the sheer power of the Arashi is unquestionable.



ARASHI DATA

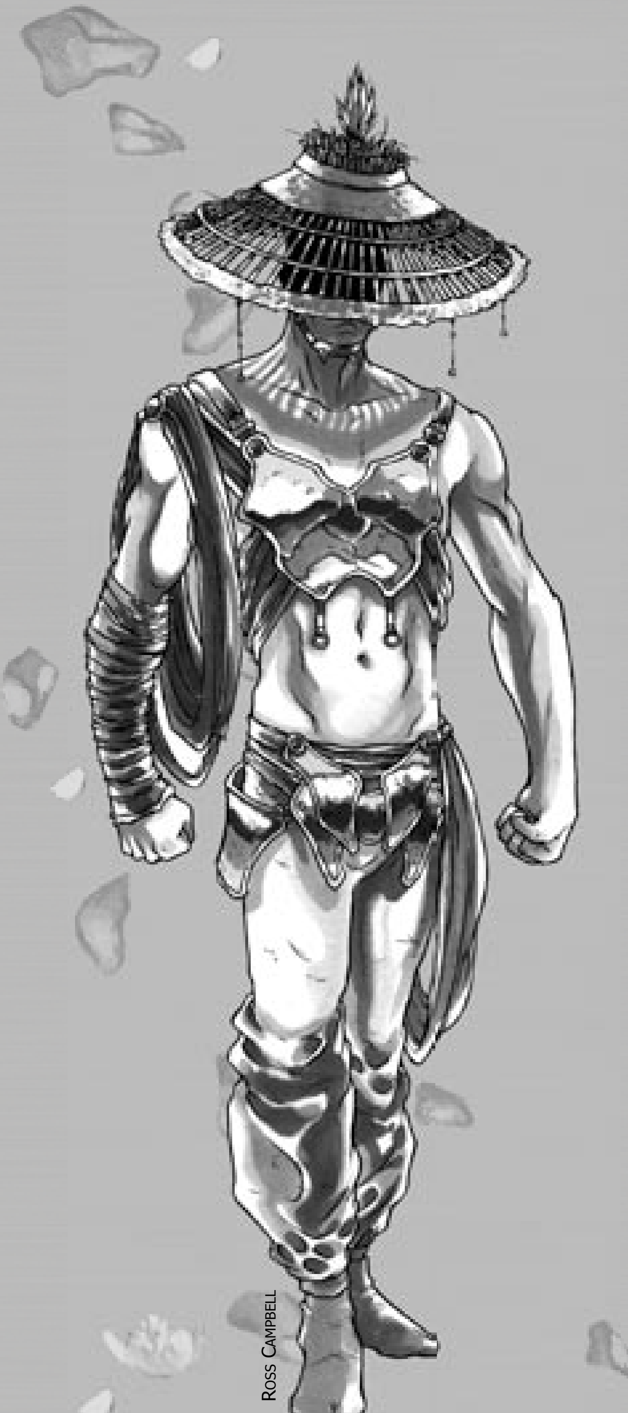
Class: Human

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV	CRFT	REP
6	3	4	3	3	4	4	2

Points: 63

Armor: 1

			-1	-2	D



CRAFT POWERS

Arc

Lightning leaps from the Arashi's fingers, striking down his foes with impunity.

Target Number: 10

Range: 14" **Damage:** 4d6 (energy)

Special: If a successful hit and damage is scored, the bolt may arc to the next model within 3" and continue to do so as long as it keeps hitting and damaging. The player controlling the model chooses which model it leaps to. It must arc if allowed to, even if that means hitting one of your own models. It can never go back on a model it has already hit that turn.

Heavens Wrath

Those that dare stand against APAC and its chosen, will face the power of the elements themselves and be found wanting.

Target Number: 10

Range: 12" **Damage:** 6d6 (energy)

Special: 1" Burst template

Lightning Fist

Blue energy crackles around the Arashi's knuckles as he pummels his opponents.

Range: Close Combat only **Damage:** 4d6 P1

Special: Automatic on successful Close Combat attack

Ride the Storm

The winds themselves carry the faithful to do their duty for the state.

Target Number: 8

Range: Self

Special: Model may ride the winds up to 12" (horizontally and vertically) this power can be used instead of movement and as an action.

Storm Shield

She calmly walked forward, the air shimmering around her, turning away both steel and energy alike.

Target Number: 8

Range: Self

Special: Model counts as Armor 4 until it has taken damage.

Tornado

Dust, debris and wind howl in a cyclonic force that drives the enemies of APAC to their knees.

Target Number: 10

Range: 12"

Special: 3" Burst template. Roll 4d6 damage dice per model under the template; if they take damage they are also considered knocked down and prone.

Crew Allowance: 1-4
Independent

The total number of Arashi cannot exceed the number of Enforcer teams included in the crew.

ENFORCERS

The Enforcer is the strong right hand of the incorporated state; these are the men and women that get the job done at any cost. Whether they are defending APAC interests in an arcology or rounding up the ‘tributes’ from the outer cities, they are all from a similar mold. Recruited from throughout the provinces, the Enforcers represent an all-encompassing mix of races and backgrounds. Taken from the many street gangs, they have made their way from the back-alleys and criminal organizations to find acceptance within the body of the corporate hierarchy.

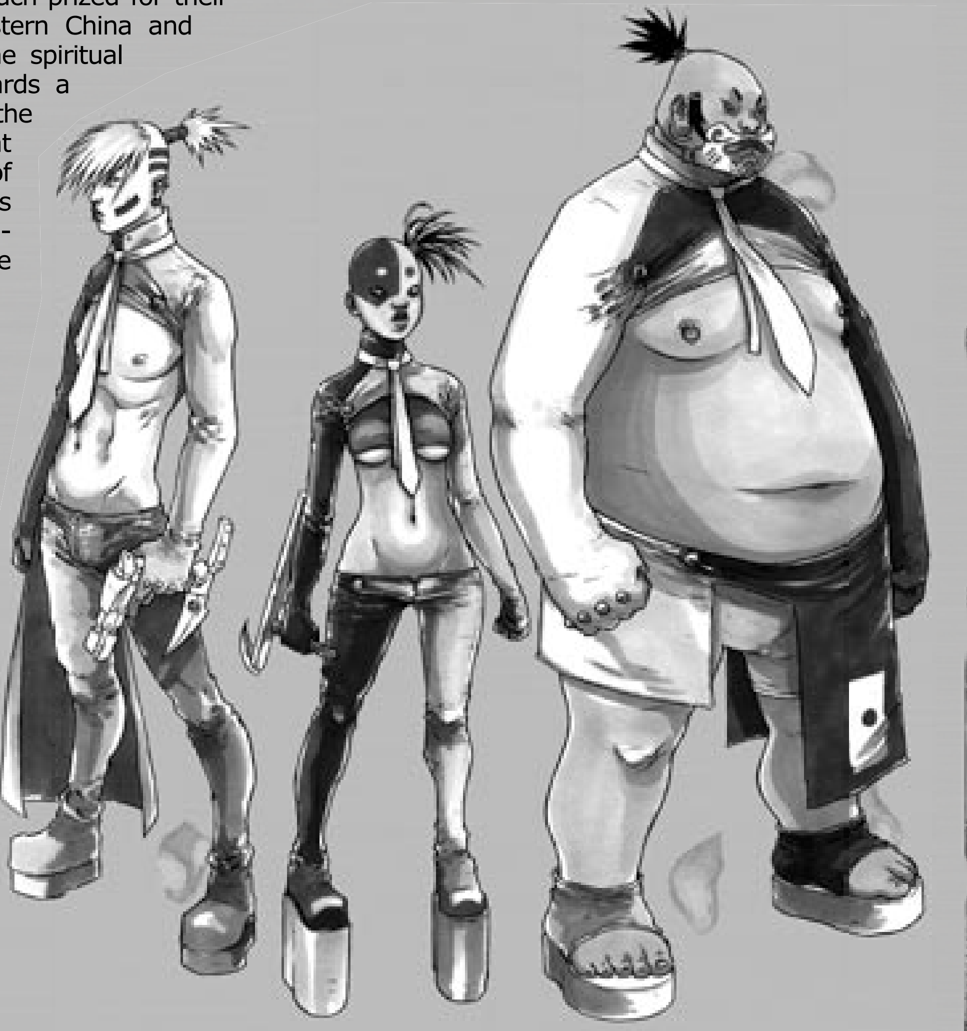
APAC has found that different regions of the incorporated state produce Enforcers with subtly different approaches and attitudes. For example, the Irkutsk borders and other nearby states, where they tend to be extremely short tempered and believe in "shoot first and ask questions later," is not even considered - in fact, if they had a motto, it would be "shoot first and then shoot some more!" The men and women of the Mongolian provinces and former western China, however, tend to be wiry individuals much-prized for their stamina. Whereas those from eastern China and Japan find themselves closer to the spiritual homeland of APAC and tend towards a more quiet traditionalism. Probably the most notable are the Enforcers that have grown up under the shadows of the corporate towers in Neo-Tokyo as they of all have an acute understanding of the hierarchy and are often the most ambitious and able.

The Enforcers perform a non-uniformed role and, as such, are not officially Asia Pacific employees, but they have taken on a number of particular styles and methods that ensure their opponents fully understand who they are up against. Relying far less heavily on armaments than their CSO counterparts, their preferences are for a far more down and dirty close range fight that gives them the opportunity to utilize their impressive close combat abilities and martial expertise.

Owing absolute allegiance to the corporate state, these men and women take their honor and responsibilities deadly seriously. With unmitigated acceptance of their position and the governance of their superiors, they are quite capable of almost unnatural acts of bravery and brutality. Although each and every Enforcer hopes that one day they may be given the honor of commanding their own team, most realize that as soon as they take on the mantle of Enforcer they are already dead - it is just a question of time.

If an Enforcer manages to survive for a sufficient length of time and prove his or her honor and capability, they may, given the correct sponsorship, manage to achieve promotion. This puts them into an even more hazardous position, but also potentially far more rewarding. While the direct physical threat to themselves is no way reduced, it is seen as a necessity that they should lead by example as well as from the front. They must ensure their team is well-trained and motivated without letting them overstep the boundaries of honorable behavior and servitude to the state. They must also perform the tasks set by their superiors with alacrity and confidence without risking any unnecessary loss of assets.

Despite these obvious difficulties, many Enforcers see this position as their first step into the corporate world and the luxuries that come with power. The first six months of a command posting are the most harrowing and hazardous of their career as they attempt to prove themselves worthy of their new-found position, for



ROSS CAMPBELL

survival and success can open many doorways for an ambitious and eager young blood.

The final addition to a standard Enforcer team is the 'Heavy'; sometimes, extreme circumstances call for extreme measures and this is where the sheer brute force and brutality of the Heavy comes into play. Capable of awesome feats of strength and fortitude, it is often the Heavy who tips the balance and brings victory to a difficult situation for an Enforcer team. These awe-inspiring individuals command respect and fear from friends and foes alike, not only due to their immense physical stature, but also to the portable launcher they tend to favor in battle. A Heavy has much to prove as most are failed sumos; they see their position amongst the Enforcers as a second chance and a way to regain their honor and bring esteem to their family by serving their state.

ENFORCER LIEUTENANT

Class: Human

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV	REP
5	2	3	2	3	3	1

Points: 30 **Armor:** 1

			-1	-2	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

The Enforcer Lieutenant has the choice of carrying either Dual Machine Pistols or a Combat Shotgun, not both.

Heavy Pistol

Range: 8/18" -2LR **Damage:** 4d6 P1

Dual Machine Pistols

Range: 6/14" -2LR **Damage:** 5d6/3d6

Katana
Your blade is your badge of office, should it fall make sure you lie next to it.

Range: Close Combat only **Damage:** 5d6 P1

Special: Parry - model may add +2 to their CCA score in close combat, but if their score is greater than their opponent they do no damage and the combat is considered a draw.

Combat Shotgun

Range: 2/4/8" **Damage:** 8d6/6d6/4d6

Special: Spray template

SKILLS & ABILITIES:

- Honor in Death
- Leadership

Crew Allowance: 0-1 per Enforcer team
Enforcer team attachment

ENFORCER DATA

Class: Human

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV
5	2	2	2	3	2

Points: 24 **Armor:** 1

		-1	-2	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

The Enforcer has the choice of carrying either Dual Machine Pistols or a Combat Shotgun, not both.

Bladed Weapons

Range: Close Combat only **Damage:** 4d6

Special: Parry - model may add +2 to their CCA score in close combat, but if their score is greater than their opponent they do no damage and the combat is considered a draw.

9mm Pistol

Range: 6/14" -2LR **Damage:** 3d6

Dual Machine Pistols

Range: 6/14" -2LR **Damage:** 5d6/3d6

Combat Shotgun

Range: 2/4/8" **Damage:** 8d6/6d6/4d6

Special: Spray template

Crew Allowance: 1+
Team Allowance: 4-8

ENFORCER HEAVY

Class: Human

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV
4	1	3	2	4	3

Points: 31 **Armor:** 1

					-1	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

Fists

Range: Close Combat only **Damage:** 5d6

Launcher

Range: 10/24" -1LR **Damage:** 4d6

Special: 5" Blast template

Move or Fire - model may not move and fire this weapon during its turn.

SKILLS & ABILITIES:

- Honor in Death
- Shrug-it-Off

Crew Allowance: 0-1 per Enforcer team
Enforcer team attachment

YUUREI

No APAC crew would be complete without the presence of a Yuurei, a key part of any infiltration team. Provided with the best available equipment from APAC's extensive research facilities, once on the 'inside' there are few systems that can withstand an inquisitive Yuurei. Lacking the flair of the Ronin Ghosts, their high-level hardware and integrated software ensures that they are equal, if not superior, to their tech-inferior counterparts. Asia Pacific represents the cutting edge of bio-electronic interfaces and, therefore, has some of the best toys to supply to their virtual operatives.

Recruited from the masses that feed the Asia Pacific corporate machine, most Yuurei have a tendency to go a little 'wild' once released from the conformity and daily ritual of office life. Senior executives are ordered to keep watch for any special ability or individuality that might mean their programmers are ready to make the leap into field operations.

Due to the fiercely loyal nature of the APAC family, it is considered an honor to be chosen as a Yuurei, knowing you will be furthering the future of your great state. A brief training period of physical development is needed to ensure that the Yuurei does not endanger or hold up its crew. In most cases, they are often poor physical specimens to whom exercise represents an unnecessary use of time and, although even experienced Yuurei remain far less physically capable than most Enforcers, at least they can sprint a short distance without collapsing and know when to keep their head down!

A Yuurei's arrogance and self-importance can irritate their crewmates, especially with the more spiritually inclined Arashi who tend to treat them, at best, as a necessary tool, but mainly as a slightly unreliable door key. Lacking the social graces necessary to gain respect or friendships, most Yuurei tend to withdraw into themselves until they catch a stray shell or they lose themselves totally in the Grid.

YUUREI DATA

Class: Cyborg

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV	HAK
5	1	2	3	2	3	3

Points: 26 **Armor:** 1

		-1	-2	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

Machine Pistol

Range: 6/14" -2LR **Damage:** 5d6/3d6

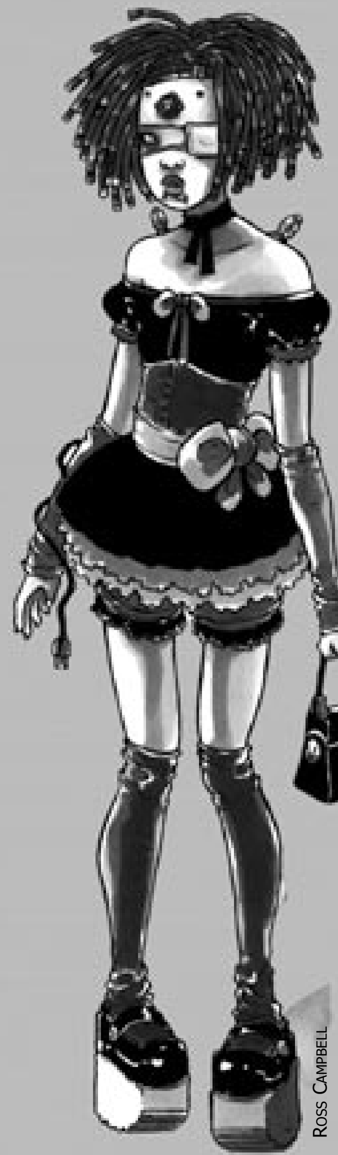
Remote Board

Range: 14" +2

SKILLS & ABILITIES:

- Sneak

Crew Allowance: 0-3
Independent

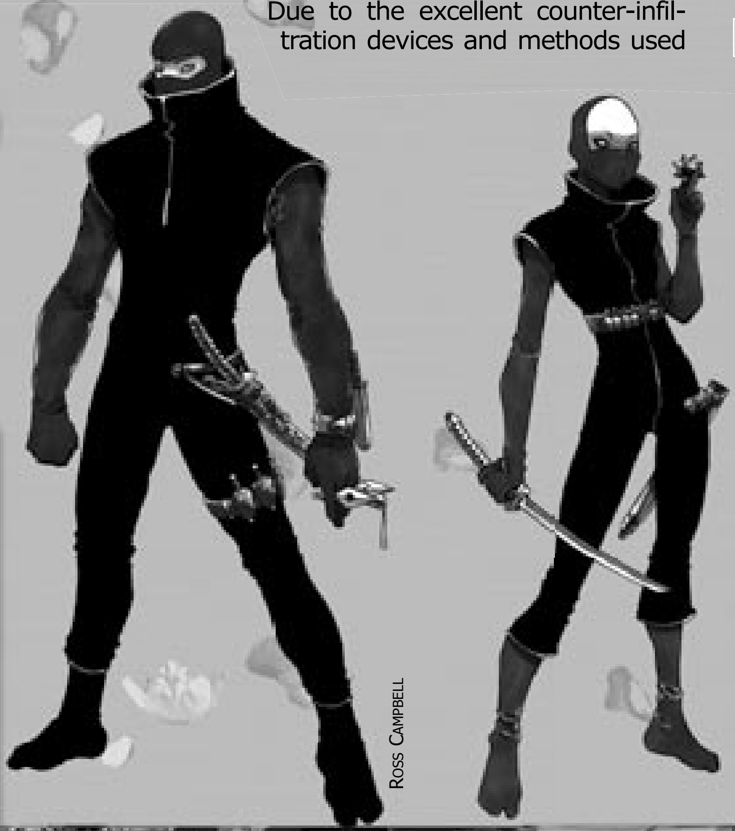

ROSS CAMPBELL

NINJA

At the beginning of the 22nd Century, the last remaining Ninja were in crisis, they had become redundant shades of their former glory. Seen by most as pyjama-wearing clowns to be bested by the least-able street kids, the world had left them behind. Due to the acceptance and widespread use of physical enhancement, the lowliest gangers with the will and the credits could get themselves upgraded to a level of skill that would provide a serious problem for the traditional followers of the shadow arts.

The Masters of Ninjutsu had to face a harsh reality, either they could maintain their traditionalist standpoint and effectively disappear or they could embrace the modern world and forge themselves a new niche within it. An exclusive agreement was made with APAC that brought the Ninja to the modern world and offered them all they could ask for in exchange for undying loyalty to the incorporated state.

Eschewing the more obvious enhancements, the dojos worked with APAC technicians to develop new levels of augmentation that complimented their training and enhanced their natural abilities. The concentration and meditation exercises that the shadow clans had practiced over the years were adapted to bring their bodies into tune with their new enhancements. They also came to the realization that the traditional single-handed assassinations by a specially chosen Ninja were behind them. Due to the excellent counter-infiltration devices and methods used by most of the major corporate institutions and governments, the chances of success with one-man incursions had become so low that another solution was needed. Therefore, training and development went instead into teamwork and stealth insurgency. A subtle delivery that left few clues as to the cause of death was abandoned in favor of a hard-hitting team approach that left its victims in full knowledge of who they had offended and why – thus, Ninja were reborn as APAC's ultimate assassins.



Not all agreed with totally allying themselves with the state; Sakura, one of the most gifted, put forward the argument that they should still be open to all relationships rather than become a lapdog to one power. This was not well received and her masters scolded her, insisting that this was the only way for their order to survive. However, Sakura still did not agree and the following day she had disappeared along with a number of like-minded individuals. It was decided not to actively pursue them, but all those who left were condemned to die if their paths should cross once more with their fellows.

Despite such events, the Masters of the arts were now assured that the legend and honor of the Ninja would continue throughout the coming centuries as it had in the past.

NINJA DATA

Class: Human

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV
7	2	4	4	3	4

Points: 47 **Armor:** 1

			-1	-2	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

Mini Crossbow

Range: 6/10" -1LR **Damage:** 3d6 P2

Katana

Range: Close Combat only **Damage:** 5d6 P1

Special: Parry - model may add +2 to their CCA score in close combat, but if their score is greater than their opponent they do no damage and the combat is considered a draw.

Shuriken

Range: Thrown (BDY+5") **Damage:** 3d6 per Shuriken

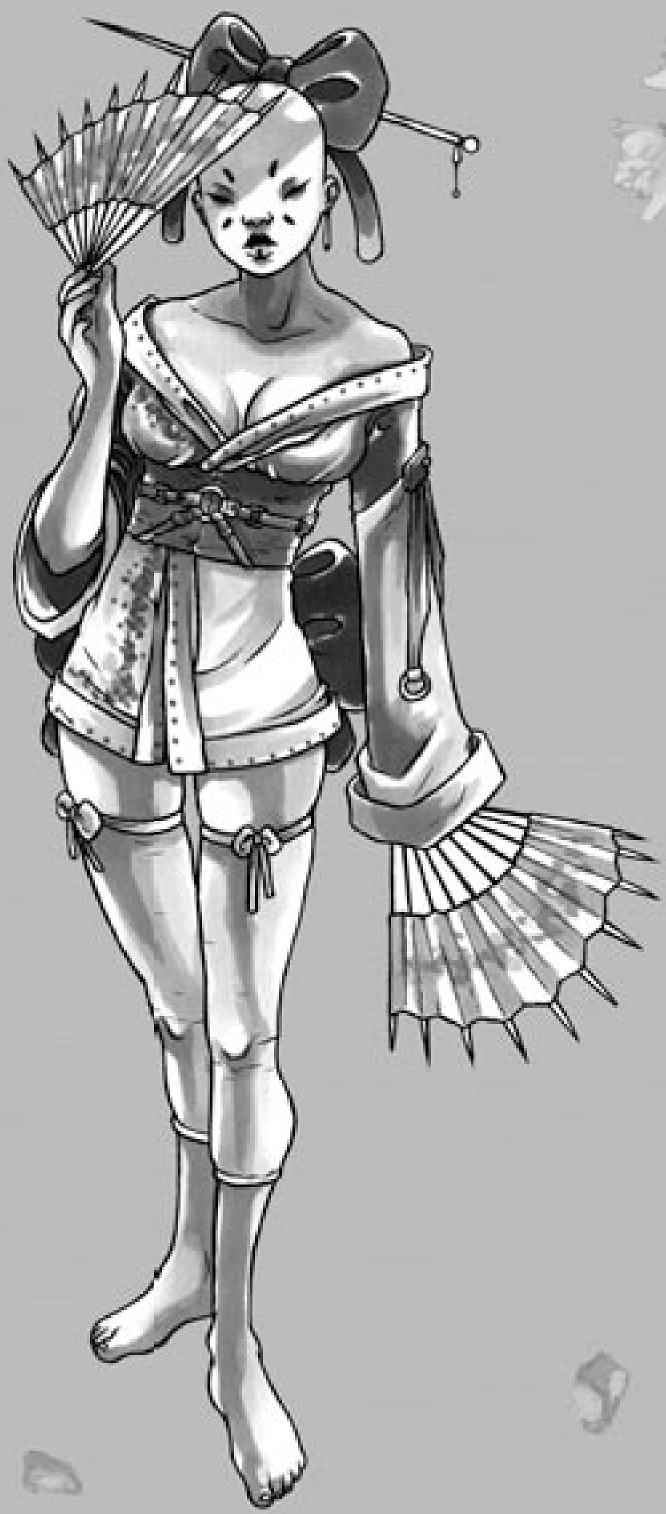
Special: On hitting your target roll a d3 to see how many Shuriken have hit it. Damage is worked out as normal per individual Shuriken.

SKILLS & ABILITIES:

- Flip
- Sneak
- Swift

Crew Allowance: 0-2
Team Allowance: 4-10

NUMB SISTERS



Throughout the world, it is common to see high-ranking APAC executives and dignitaries accompanied by their consorts. The outward appearance of these women is of devoted concubine or geisha, but the truth is somewhat more complex.

One phenomenon that has eluded the tampering of the APAC research teams and, in fact, biotech teams everywhere, is the ability to genetically create Craft users. Many years have been spent chasing theories that inevitably end up in blind alleys and, however advanced the techniques or the many resources that were thrown at the problem, nothing has yet been found that can replicate or enhance these abilities.

APAC has set up a cooperative research facility with the Xenone Corporation and, amidst great secrecy, these labs have started to make progress towards understanding the development and growth of Craft abilities. Publicly it was promoted as a purely academic program to better understand and help assimilate those with the Craft ability, led by two of the world's foremost experts in the field, Juan Cortez (Xenone) and Sonada Fujiwara (APAC). The Vatacina publicly denounced the program, proclaiming it was treating these individuals as second-class citizens or, far worse, as mentally ill. The reality was far more sinister than even they realized; the joint venture had decided to fly in the face of both Unipol mandates and international treaties and begin the development of a replicant program with the sole purpose of manufacturing totally loyal psychic drones that could be used for their own needs.

The general public remains ignorant of this well-guarded secret, although it has produced its first fruit. Known affectionately by the research staff as 'Numb Sisters', due to their cool demeanor, they are the first fruits of this strange and dangerous relationship. Unfortunately, they have not quite been able to completely recreate the power and diversity of the naturally occurring mutations. APAC wanted to prevent any possible security problems like those previously caused by their earlier 'cousins', as well as ensuring their complete loyalty. To make certain of this, they have had the synthetics' personalities dampened by subliminally feeding them APAC propaganda during their sleep cycles. This ensures total loyalty to the state, but the enforced programming is believed to be inhibiting their Craft abilities. Although they are not as strong as natural-born Craft users, it is interesting that all Numb Sisters possess the ability to create a psychic dampening field, which means that should another Craft user come within range, they will find themselves unable to produce their usual fireworks.

NUMB SISTERS

Class: Synthetic

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV	CRFT
5	1	2	3	3	4	1

Points: 33 **Armor:** 1

			-1	-2	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

Razor Fans

From her sleeves, she flipped out the gleaming fan in one swift moment; Darren fell before her clutching at the gushing wound in his neck!

Range: Close Combat only **Damage:** 3d6

Special: Parry - model may add +2 to their CCA score in close combat, but if their score is greater than their opponent they do no damage and the combat is considered a draw.

CRAFT POWERS

Choke

The windpipe had been crushed, but no bruising was visible on the neck. It was if he'd been strangled from the inside!

Range: 10"

Special: Opposed Craft test against defending models BDY attribute. 3d6 damage bypassing all armor.

Inhibit

I looked out from my own body as my comrades fell before my very eyes and I could do nothing but watch helplessly; a prisoner trapped within my own frame!

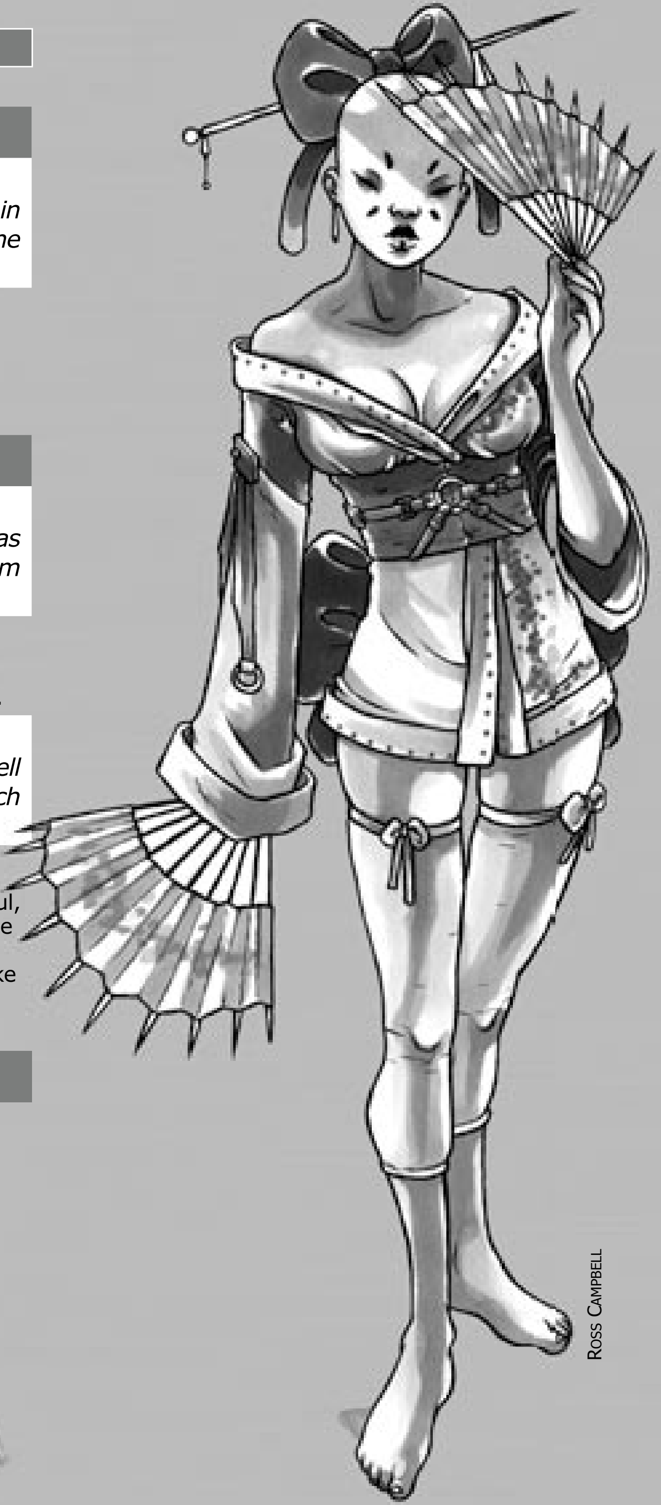
Range: 12"

Telepathic Craft attack. If the attack is successful, the model is frozen to the spot and cannot move or activate, for targeting purposes he counts as a prone model. The model may attempt to shake of the effects of the power in the control phase by rolling a successful NRV test.

SKILLS & ABILITIES:

- Sacrifice
- Dead Zone

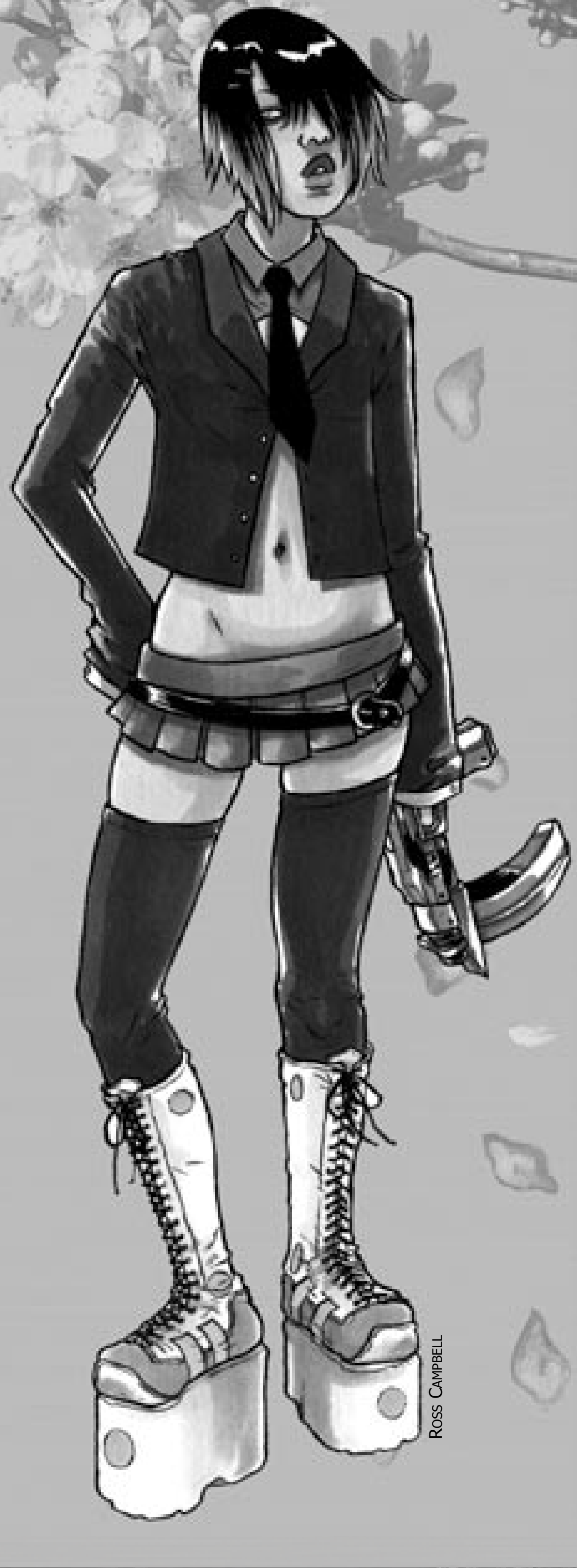
Crew Allowance: 0-2
Team Allowance: 2-4

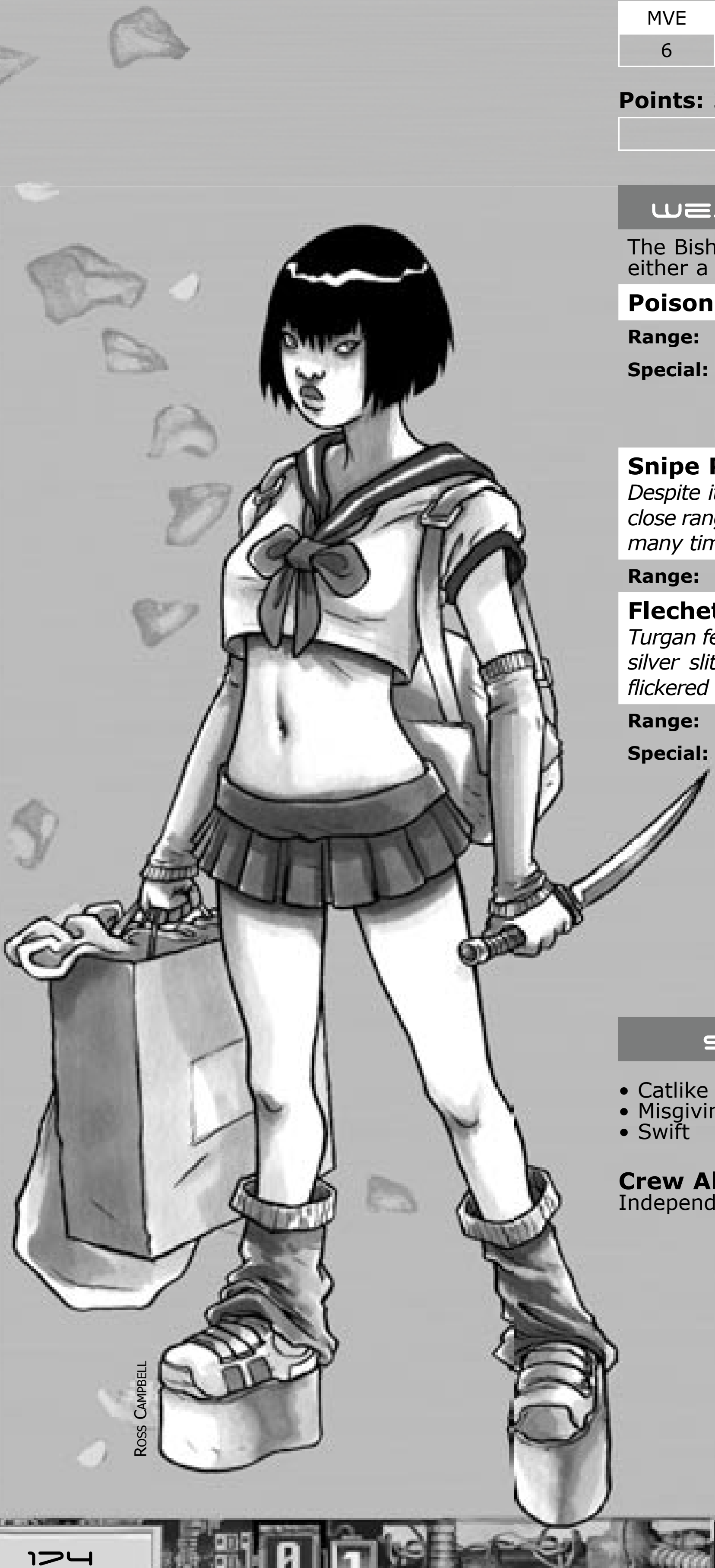


BISHOUJO SENSHI

Trained from birth these, highly specialized assassins can move undetected through most environments, but they truly come into their own in the bustling metropolises and arcologies. Although there are few as stealthy and nimble as the Bishoujo Senshi, it is their ability to be invisible and yet stand within plain sight of a target that is one of their greatest assets - for what sort of threat could a young girl pose? This creates a brief moment of hesitation that gives them all the time they need to carry out their assignment. In fact, many stare stunned, unable to bring themselves to target these waifs of girls even as they decimate their comrades before their eyes!

The girls' development begins before conception as careful genetic manipulation of their DNA means that they grow up unnaturally agile and strong. They rarely develop physically beyond early puberty and, therefore, maintain the outward appearance of teenagers even if they survive into their twenties and thirties. Their training begins at a very early age, as they are carefully educated in matters of etiquette and behavior until they are able to present a facade of calm innocence even in the most chaotic of situations. Almost as soon as they begin to walk, their combat and weapons' training begins so that by the age of 13, when they are first sent on active service, they have developed into highly-capable killing machines. They use many different disguises and infiltration methods, but the role of schoolgirl has always been the most successful in catching their victims off-guard - only a cold-blooded sociopath would be able to gun down such an innocent without a second thought. It is during those few seconds of hesitation and consideration that the Bishoujo Senshi strikes in a deadly flurry of murderous intent that leaves a bloodied corpse, often with a look of total disbelief on its face.





Ross Campbell

BISHOUJO SENSHI

Class: Human

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV
6	3	3	4	2	4

Points: 38 **Armor:** 1

		-1	-2	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

The Bishoujo Senshi has the choice of carrying either a Snipe Pistol or a Flechete Pistol, not both.

Poisoned Blades

Range: Close Combat only **Damage:** 4d6

Special: Poison - make a d6 check each control phase for Poison. 1-3 model automatically takes 1 damage. 4-6 model has shrugged off the Poison and it has no further effect.

Snipe Pistol

Despite its name this small but powerful pistol is best at close range, but the punch it packs is superior to weapons many times its size.

Range: 8/18" -2LR **Damage:** 4d6 P2

Flechete Pistol

Turgan felt a tiny sting in his left arm; pulling out the tiny silver slither he looked at it bemused, before his eyes flickered shut and he fell to the ground.

Range: 8/14” -1LR **Damage:** 3d6

Special: Choose one of the three ammo types available before making each ranged attack and apply the effects if the model is damaged.

Poison: Make a d6 check each control phase for Poison. 1-3 model automatically takes 1 damage. 4-6 model has shrugged off the Poison and it has no further effect.

Fearidon: Model immediately becomes panicked and flees.

Inhibitor: Stops models with CRFT powers from using their abilities for d3 rounds.

SKILLS & ABILITIES:

- Catlike
- Misgiving
- Swift
- Flip
- Snap Shot

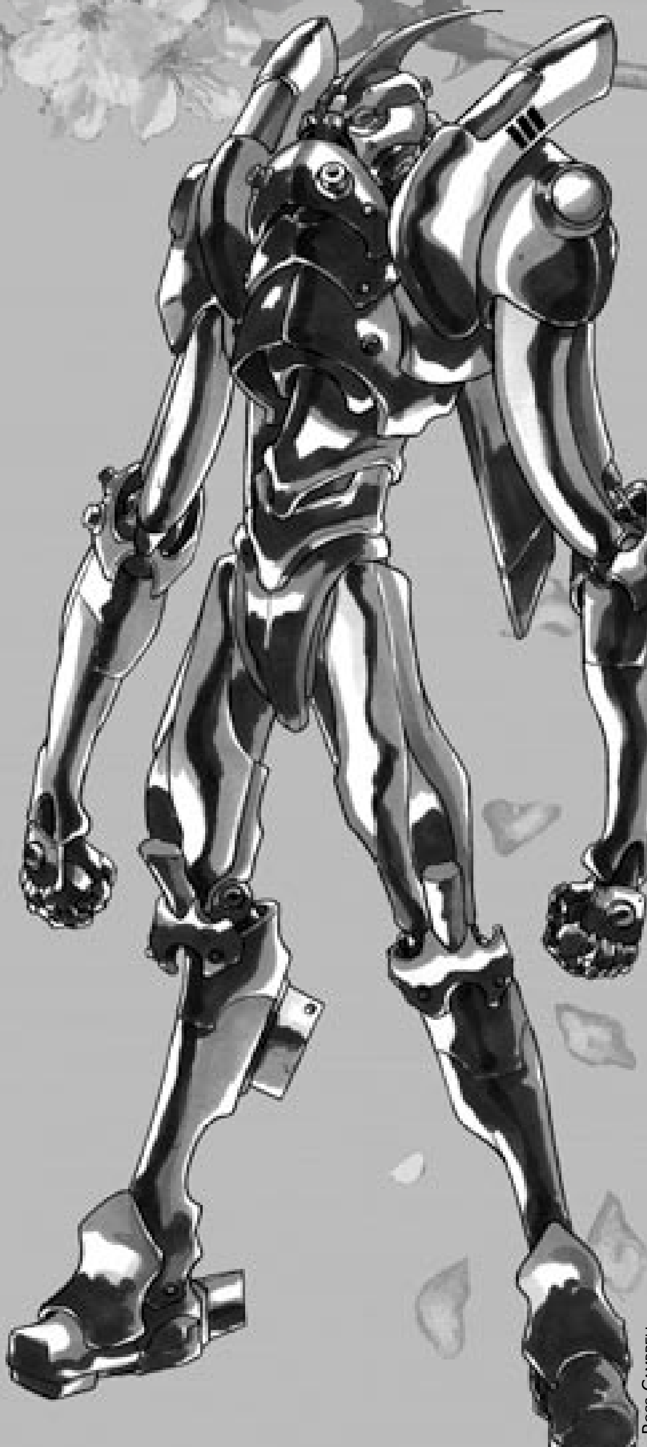
Crew Allowance: 0-6
Independent

TADS

The Tactical Assault and Defense Suit is the pinnacle of modern military technology. Developed as the elite supplement to APAC's ground forces, new models are always going into production, although they have recently released variants on the open market. The research facilities of APAC represent a collection of some of the greatest human minds coupled with almost unlimited resources, and the TADS are one of their crowning glories. Much of the technology for the suits has been adapted from recent developments in environmental suits, particularly Low-G mining suits commonly used on asteroids and on the Moon. There are, however, certain limitations: for example, the onboard thrusters that in Low or Zero-G enable the suits to fly, only really have the strength to propel the suits a few meters on a higher gravity world such as Earth. The TADS is a fully enclosed combat environment for a single user/pilot, armored and armed to the teeth, it is not only an excellent mobile weapons' platform, but also a lethal opponent in close combat. Standing approximately seven feet tall and reinforced with supra-dense alloys, its internal armaments consist of microburst guns plus their combat blades. The mere appearance of a TADS in the middle of a conflict can often break an opponent and give new hope to their allies.

With no concept of stealth and delicacy, the pilots tend to be very flamboyant and extrovert, often causing much consternation amongst their superiors who tend to worry more about resources and success ratings than personality. Their suits tend to be brightly painted so as to instantly identify the user, but also an extension of their character with many showing their array of 'kills' painted across the chestplate or on the forearm guards. The adventures and exploits of certain pilots have become wildly popular subjects for many family entertainment shows which APAC willingly bring to their citizens, which ensures that there are always many willing and eager candidates ready to enlist and serve the state. It is quite common for TADS to make public appearances at shopping malls or be seen opening public buildings with city officials; such events are incredibly popular and usually crammed with screaming fans, desperate for autographs and pictures or just wanting to touch their heros! More like celebrities and sports stars, there is no lack of candidates to become future pilots - particularly popular pilots have been known to appear promoting products in Grid spots for APAC. Officials will often rail against the pilots' exuberant personalities, but it has been found that these 'A type' personalities are the best fit to link with the suits' inbuilt AI - they are highly trained and professional operatives, even if they tend to be show offs!

The suits themselves represent a large outlay in resources and materials and it is rare to see more than a couple of TADS in any combat situation and then only under the command of the more experienced Arashi; APAC is reluctant to put the suits at risk under the control of rash, unproven commanders. APAC is also very careful to ensure that TADS should not fall into the hands of the opposition and, therefore, each suit is equipped with a highly sensitive auto-destruct system and enough thermite to ensure no trace is left for analysis. A fittingly bright end for many TADS pilots, whose careers tend to be more like shooting stars than the suns they aspire to be.



Ross Campbell

TADS

Class: Cyborg

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV
5	4	3	3	4	4

Points: 63 **Armor:** 3

			-1	-2	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

Body Blades

Wicked looking blades burst from their limbs, leaving nothing but fluid and body parts as they strode into the melee.

Range: Close Combat only **Damage:** 5d6

Special: Parry - model may add +2 to their CCA score in close combat, but if their score is greater than their opponent they do no damage and the combat is considered a draw.

Machine Fist

As it raised its arms, the others just stood there bemused. I was the only one who dove for cover and that's why I'm the only here to tell of it.

Range: 10/18" -2 LR **Damage:** 5d6

Special: Automatic

Thrusters

A white light erupted from their backs and they sped up between the city blocks and out of sight.

Special: May move up to their regular movement horizontally (including Run move) but also use thrusters to travel up to 8" vertically, either over terrain or up to higher levels

Sealed Suit

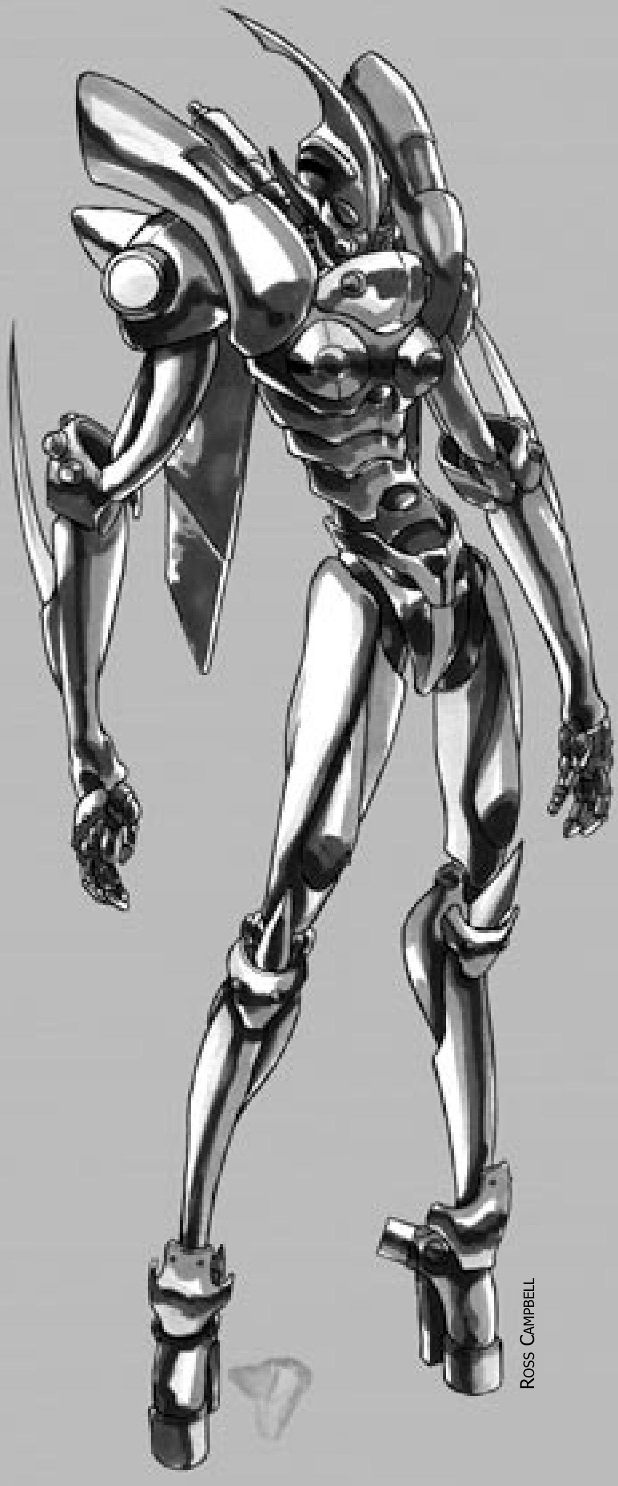
"Seal the doors and blow the hatch; let them suck vacuum. That'll teach them to board my ship." Teach bellowed. For a moment all was quiet and then the pounding on the door began.

Special: Model is immune to effects from environmental changes such as lack of air and pressure, and airborne agents such as gas weapons.

SKILLS & ABILITIES:

- Run 'n' Gun
- Self-Destruct

Crew Allowance: 0-2
Team Allowance: 1-4



Ross Campbell

PANTHER SECURIBOT

The Robot Rights Movement of 2136 caused massive upheaval and disruption throughout the largely automated systems of APAC's manufacturing and security procedures. The problems in the factories were easily solved by an increase in direct human manpower and observation as well as the 'limiting' of the systems' AIs. At this time, the electronics experts were also looking into limited AIs for use in security devices.

The problem was that no matter how well-motivated or trained a human security guard, he still gets tired and careless - a situation that leads to lapses of attention and potential deadly mistakes. A fully cognoscent AI developed along the same lines as a human, however, never gets tired, but will not stay permanently loyal and is difficult to manipulate and coerce, especially with the recent system regulations regarding AI labor and the strict union rules.

The obvious solution to this was to develop a different type of AI and this has been done, primarily, through the development of an animal-style AI that mimics the learning processes of the creature around which it is designed. There have also been some experiments into AI that has no genetic model, however this has yet to bear fruit as the complex relationships between personality and intellect are still yet to be truly understood. The use of animal personality profiles has produced some very impressive results, far beyond initial expectations. Taking the intellect profiles of birds of prey, particularly owls, and transposing them into baseline security observation systems means they have access to camera and sensor systems that have almost perfect attention. They can also sense and make allowances for any minor changes and have fast reflexes that the can react instantly to any threat.

The design of mobile security resources has been slightly more troubled. The first and most obvious patterns were based upon a canine model like the ubiquitous robotic guard-dogs still popular in many homes. These experiments had some success, but ultimately failed due to a lack of 'punch' when it came to dealing with intruders. A more independent model was needed and, after a short trial of ape AI that was quickly scrapped due to too many problems, it was decided to look into feline models. After a number of trials, the panther pattern was deemed the most successful and the Panther Securibot found its way onto the market. A solitary and territorial creature that possesses unending patience and absolute aggression, this sleek and deadly killing machine will protect a designated area at all costs. There are known to be other patterns of a similar design in development including rumors of the larger and more powerful Tiger model.

SECURIBOT

Class: Robot

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV
6	0	3	3	4	5

Points: 37 **Armor:** 3

				-2	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

Razor Claws

It was tearing through the steel security shutters as if they were paper; we readied our weapons - for all the good it would do us.

Range: Close Combat only **Damage:** 6d6 P1

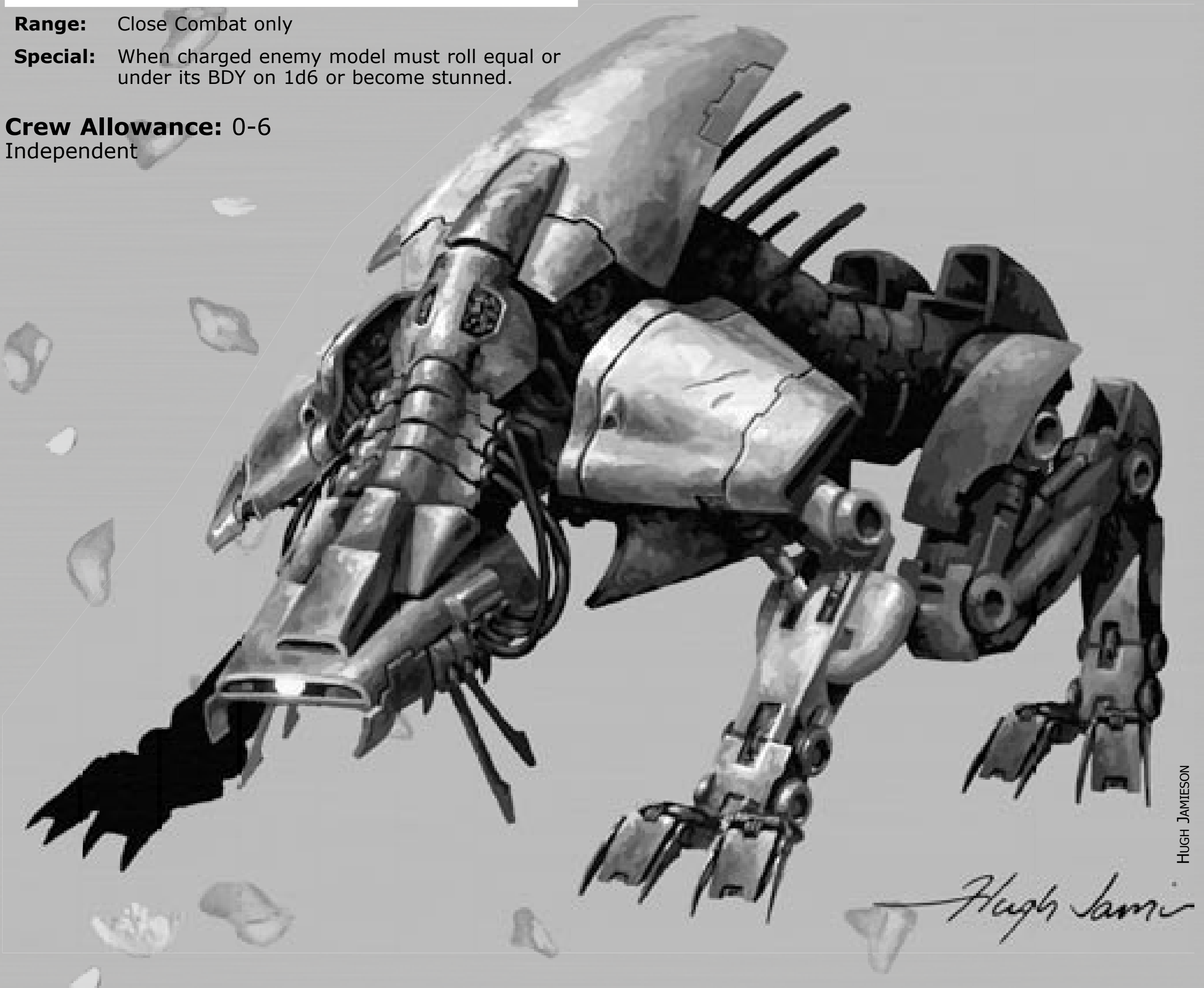
Dragons Breath

There was a brief flash as it leapt on Rodriguez, and it was over before it began as it ripped his prone body in two!

Range: Close Combat only

Special: When charged enemy model must roll equal or under its BDY on 1d6 or become stunned.

Crew Allowance: 0-6
Independent



HUGH JAMIESON

SILICON DREAMS

The tortured scream of the hydraulics could be heard as the hatchway unlocked and opened inwards, dark orange rust crumbling to the floor like dried blood.

“Got it, it’s open.” Michi disconnected her board from the electronic panel.

“About time,” said the figure kneeling next to her, “I thought we were never going to get in.”

“Keep quiet!” hissed Mitsuko, “Someone knows we’re here. That was a security drone we just blasted.” She turned to the rest of her crew. “Lets get inside and get the job done. I have a bad feeling about this place. It doesn’t feel right.”

She turned to the TADS next to her, “Follow us in. Let Hikaru and Isamu know they are to stay out of sight below and make sure our exit is secure.”

Mitsuko watched Hikaru and Isamu as they moved into the shadows below, for a moment admiring how TADS move so gracefully despite their bulk.

“Let’s go.” Mitsuko moved towards the hatch and swung inside.

Michi followed immediately, having returned her remote board to its usual position on her arm. With the two TADS following, Kenshin dropped quietly inside.

The atmosphere was thick and cloying, and they all felt the chill as they moved into the stark corridor. Always alert, Mitsuko’s eyes scoured the walls for electronic security devices. The light was dim, but they were still able to see the general layout around them. She spotted the red globes above each door, but it appeared they were not active, with no red glow as the telltale sign of an active security camera.

A voice whispered beside her,

“I managed to tap into the security protocols as well, those cameras will be out of commission for a few hours now.” Michi was smiling, she was good at her job and she knew it. So did Mitsuko; Michi was the best Yuurei she had ever had on her crew. She just hoped she would stay alive long enough to prove that to the rest of the crew.

“Good job, now do something useful and get this door open.” Mitsuko motioned to a large door on the right.

Michi went to the door and plugged herself in. Within seconds the door slid open, the white glare from inside making them all take a step backwards and shield their eyes. Once her eyes were accustomed to the glare from the room beyond, Mitsuko, flanked by the two TADS, stepped inside.

In contrast to the dark corridor they had come from, the room was very bright. Everything was white - the walls were white, as was the floor, which was covered by a metal grid. There was also a terrible smell lingering in the air, a rotting smell that seemed to crawl across the room to meet them. On the walls were banks of electronic equipment, most with screens that were now dark and empty. In the middle of the room was a large steel table that had two metal arms hanging over the surface like robotic hands clasping at the air, silent and immobile, but with a lingering menace.

A shiver ran down Mitsuko’s back. The image of a mortuary had sprung into her mind and an overwhelming sense of death washed over her, a feeling she was having trouble shaking. They were in the upper levels of the pyramid, the areas where the public never went, and she knew that this was something they were not meant to see.

Moving closer to the table, she almost slipped and, glancing down, she saw a red mass spread across the floor at her feet. She was by no means squeamish and had seen a lot of death and destruction, but seeing a piece of flesh so casually discarded like a common piece of garbage, made her skin crawl.

The surgical steel table was dripping water mixed with blood that drained onto the floor and through a grating.

“What is this place?” whispered Kenshin. The sound of his voice broke through the silence making more than one heart skip a beat.

“Something’s coming.” Katsu was standing guard at the door to the white room.

Mitsuko, her mind immediately kicking into gear, let the years of training it had taken to become Arashi take control.

“Which direction? Michi, start work on that other door and see if it will open.”

“Further down the corridor, coming towards us.”

Michi moved to the other door, but this one wasn’t locked and it opened as she approached. Her pistol was in her hand before it was fully open, but the room beyond was quiet.

“Ok, let’s move. Katsu, Kichiro, let that door close and get over here, we’re moving on.”

Kichiro moved away from the door and it slid silently shut behind him.

As they entered the other room, Michi had already moved to the next door.

Mitsuko looked around; this room was full of glass cabinets, with a mass of pipes and cables connecting them to consoles and equipment all about the room. The consoles emanated a dull green glow, with a power unlike the machines in the white room. Kenshin was already moving towards the nearest cabinet, his inquisitiveness getting the better of him. Mitsuko followed as curiosity overcame any trepidation she may have felt, but what she saw when she reached the cabinet would be embedded in her memory for the rest of her life.

Inside was a man - or what was left of one, his skin mottled and decaying, cheeks sunken and eyes closed. All over his body, tubes had been roughly inserted, cutting into the flesh, the edges of the wounds ragged and torn. A thick bunch of cables were forced into his gaping mouth. Mitsuko leaned closer.

The eyes flicked open.

The body writhed in agony, arms flailing at unseen assailants.

Mitsuko leaped back, her heart in her mouth, "He's alive!"

Kenshin jerked backwards as the man continued to convulse inside the cabinet.

Before they had a chance to do any more, a scream pierced the air.

Mitsuko turned in time to see Katsu falling backwards through the door. Something was on his back, legs wrapped around his neck while more arms were pulling him to the ground. Mitsuko concentrated and lightning sprang from her fingers, hitting Katsu's assailant and throwing him back into the room beyond. But it was too late, steel fingers had pierced Katsu's suit and electrical energy had flowed through the TADS, sparks flying and causing Katsu to writhe in agony.

Creatures swarmed out of the shadows, as if through the very walls themselves.

Kichiro opened fire, spraying bullets at the swarming creatures, tearing through flesh and smashing equipment around the room. But they kept coming, and Kenshin, a lethal mass of whirling metal, swung his swords cutting through creature after creature. Lightning flared from Mitsuko's fingers time after time, as creature after creature was knocked to the ground.

Through the noise of gunfire and the screams of the dying, Katsu's voice was heard, "Mitsuko, I'm fallen… the suit…"

The explosion ripped through the room and bodies were thrown into the air and limbs torn apart, jagged pieces of broken equipment cutting through the air like knives through butter. Flames seared into pipes as equipment burned and collapsed. And then - darkness…..

A light slowly filtered through the darkness. Mitsuko opened her eyes and blinked. Reaching for her head, she expected pain, but there was none. She was disorientated. Where was she? Where were the rest of her crew? Confused memories began to surface. They were inside a pyramid, or was it a factory? They were attacked, ambushed - that was it, yes, ambushed by CSO. But what had happened to her? An explosion. But she had survived. They must have missed her. She looked around. The room was empty. She had to get out and regroup with her crew.

Struggling to her feet and keeping to the shadows, she crept across the room, keeping close to the white tiled walls and trying to make as little noise as possible.

She reached the open door and peered outside. The corridor was empty. Steam escaped from the pipes running along the walls and she could see an open hatchway not far away; she could make it in a few seconds. She looked behind her to make sure she was not being followed. Taking a deep breath, she ran down the corridor and out of the open hatchway. Daylight hit her eyes, blinding her for a minute until her eyes got accustomed to the light. With a brief look around, she ran off into the alley …

"So how is our new guest?"

The technician turned towards his master.

"The program has been accepted. She is completely immersed in the imprint."

"Good. The others?"

"All successful installs. We will move their bodies to the upper levels for processing shortly," The technician smiled. "They had got further than the others. They must have been good."

Mulmak took one last look at the transparent cabinets against the wall.

"But not good enough."

AND THE BOTTOM DROPPED OUT...

Growing up in the Xenone arcology had been a pleasant enough experience for Charlotte ‘Charlie’ Foster. Her parents, both doctors, were prominent and highly respected, and they were able to afford a luxurious lifestyle for themselves and their daughter. The children of Xenone employees were considered to be the future of the company. Raised in the Xenone arcology, educated in Xenone schools, and growing up watching Xenone vids, most corporate children never even considered leaving the company or even the arcology, so indoctrinated were they into the corporate life.

Charlie had wandered freely throughout much of the massive structure during her childhood; exploring the less restricted areas of the Los Alamos complex with the children of other scientists, and being treated largely with good humor and indulgence by the Xenone security personnel whenever they gained access into an area where they were not supposed to play. Occasionally, she had been caught by one of the elite Helix Guard patrolmen in a severely restricted area of the arcology, and they had been forced to notify her parents. The rare times this had happened had earned her severe lectures on the dangers of playing in high-security sectors and a stern reminder of the reasons that some areas were labeled off-limits. She had always paid scant attention during these lectures, but now, as she found herself being dragged at a panicked pace through the most secure and off-limits sections of the Xenone research wing, they kept flashing through her mind.

Charlie had not the slightest clue what was happening, being still in a daze from her harsh awakening. It was sometime after 0400, and she had been roughly awakened from sleep a short while ago to see her mother, wide-eyed with fear, looming over her.

“Up, Charlie, and quick!” her mother had commanded. “Get dressed as fast as you can. We have to go,”

Charlie rubbed her eyes, still groggy from sleep. Unsure if she was actually dreaming, she was startled by her mother’s behavior. Her mother was never this frantic, and where would they “have to go” at such an odd hour of the night?

“Where is dad?” she asked, her voice hitching in her throat, but her mother had already vanished into some other part of their home, ransacking drawers as she packed hurriedly.

“Charlie!” her mother reappeared in the doorway. “Don’t ask questions. Just get out of bed quickly, and get dressed as fast as you can! Do you hear me?”

Charlie leapt out of bed without a word, and clumsily pulled the first outfit she could find out of her closet. Some primitive part of her brain recognized that she and her mother were entering a flight mode of some kind, and grabbing a couple of other shirts and a jacket she stuffed them into a small bag just as her mother came back into the room.

“Are you ready?” she said, and Charlie found herself dragged off into the strangest night of her life. She had seen the Alice in Wonderland vids as a little girl, and this was like tumbling down her own rabbit hole into a strange world that was a frightening and mad parody of her own.

Her mother was one of the most respected scientists in the Xenone arcology, with virtually every security access that the science division had. Her ID card, however, did not seem to be working particularly well this evening. At every secure entry, Charlie’s mother swiped her card, only to be denied access. Charlie didn’t understand exactly what was happening, but she knew it was not good. Maybe she could help.

“Mom, I think I can help.”

Her mother did not even look at her, just shook her head as if to clear it and hurried her daughter off down another hallway. Charlie realized that she was not getting through, her mother seemed lost in her own thoughts and fears. In desperation, she just stood still, resisting her mother’s efforts to keep her moving. For a moment, her mother seemed not to realize what was happening, but then she turned around furiously.

“Come on, we…”

‘Mom, listen…I know how to get around the doors. My friends and I can get everywhere in the arc’. Just tell me where we need to go?”

Her mother seemed to hesitate for a moment, but then her face set into an expression of grim resolve.

“R and D Lab, Alpha Prime,”

Charlie’s heart leapt into her throat at her mother’s words, but she did her best to sound confident. “That’s a tough one. We’d better get moving.”

Her head was spinning with questions. Why could her mother not get into any of the restricted sectors? Why did she need to get to Alpha Prime at this time of night, and why take Charlie there? She was definitely NOT cleared for access into the most secure lab in all of Xenone’s primary research facility and yet her mother seemed to be intent on taking her there - and all this despite the fact that her own security access seemed to have been revoked. More important - where was her father?

She led her mother to one of the recreation areas. Here, Charlie moved a table against a corner with practiced ease and climbed onto it, gesturing to her mother to join her. A ceiling tile pushed upwards and out of the way revealed a pair of thick conduit pipes that Charlie used to climb up into the ceiling. With some effort, the older woman followed suit, and her daughter quickly replaced the tile. Leading the way across the support tracks in the ceiling, they crawled in silence in the stuffy ceiling area between floors, ducking under pipes and wiring, cable trunks and ductwork. After several turns, Charlie stopped and removed another tile. The two of them lowered themselves into a utility room, stepping down onto a massive water filtration machine and then down to the floor. Her mother looked around her and then at her daughter.

“Where to now?” she asked.

Charlie grinned conspiratorially “Follow me.”

The next hour and a half consisted of sneaking and crawling, climbing and scrambling, through maintenance rooms and passageways, service shafts and air ducts. They crawled through subfloors and wriggled through ceilings, but eventually found themselves looking through an air vent into the Alpha Prime laboratory. The lab was dark and silent, only minimal night lighting illuminating the stark white and brushed steel of the room.

“Ready?” the older woman asked.

Charlie shrugged her shoulders. Her mother evidently took that as an affirmative, and silently removed the grate with a care and delicacy that reminded her daughter that she had been a genetic researcher long before she became laboratory director. Slowly and silently, they lowered themselves into the laboratory. Once on the ground, they both paused for a moment, Charlie uncertain how to proceed and her mother as if waiting for something to happen. After a few moments, an expression of sadness and regret seemed to pass across her face, but was quickly replaced by one of determination.

“Come with me, Charlie” her mother turned and walked off into the shadowed darkness of the lab.

Charlie followed her mother to where she had stopped in front of a small cabinet of some kind of thick, clear plas, inside which, on a shining steel tray, lay a shapeless glob of flesh. Initially, Charlie was repulsed, as she watched her mother peering intently at monitoring equipment surrounding the cabinet. Small wires seemed to disappear into the main bulk of the glob and, looking more closely, she noticed it had small tendrils coming from it that appeared to move slightly. The displays had a small, neat label mounted to them that read ‘SAD-006.’ Charlie thought it seemed oddly familiar to her. She seemed to remember hearing her parents talk about it, but before she could dig any further into her memory, her mother spoke to her.

“Charlie, I love you,” she said.

Charlie opened her mouth to return her mother’s display of affection, but the older woman shook her head and covered her daughter’s mouth with her hand. The solemnity on her mother’s face made Charlie pause.

“You have to trust me, Charlie. Just trust me and do as I say. We have no choice now.”

Suddenly, fear gripped the teenager, and a chilling thought darted through her mind as her mother removed her hand and allowed her to speak.

“Mom, where is Dad?” she asked, her voice shaking slightly, but her mother had already turned away. Silently, she opened the plas cabinet. Immediately, alarm lights began flashing, and sirens sounded out in the hallway. Charlie crouched instinctively, ready to bolt, but her mother grasped her shoulders seeming unfazed by the alarms, as though she had expected them.

“What’s happening, Mom?”

Suddenly, she noticed that her mother was holding the strange glob of flesh in her other hand, delicately pinching it between two fingers. She cringed away from the jellyfish-like creature, but then saw the determined look on her mother’s face.

“No!” she cried, and started to back away.

Her mother’s hand clawed at her shoulder with a desperate strength, and she felt something cold and moist press onto the back of her neck. Horrified, she tried to grasp the thing writhing behind her and then whirled around to face her mother.

As the tendrils of the creature wriggled around her neck, she felt a slight tingle at the top of her spine. Her mother was staring at her with a look of incredible sadness on her face. Over her mother’s shoulder, she saw the door to the laboratory open, and three Xenone SecuriClones push through, weapons raised. The tingling on her neck seemed to be spreading throughout her body, and for an instant if felt as if a single chill passed through every inch of her. This swiftly became a warm, soothing sensation and then vanished altogether. Light flashed, impossibly bright, from the doorway, and a cacophony of explosive noise shattered the silence. Her mother’s eyes flared wide for a second in pain, but then closed as she fell at her daughter’s feet. From inside her head, Charlie could hear a great roaring, like a cresting tidal wave, and at its peak, the world went dark.

“Wake up, richy,” the voice was young, but still menacing, dragging her up from the darkness. Charlie could feel her mind trying to wake up, as if clawing its way back towards consciousness from a great distance.

She could vaguely make out her surroundings, but she felt as though her mind was filled with mud. Everything seemed to be moving slowly, with a time delay, and she felt uncoordinated, sore and exhausted. Her eyes opened and in the dim light figures loomed over her, four—no, five of them.

“What have we here?” the same voice continued. “Looks to me like a bag of fun wrapped in a meal ticket,”

Charlie was slow to take in the actual words, but was chilled by the malicious tone of the speaker. Suddenly, energy seemed to flood her body and her senses seemed to return all at once. She realized she was lying on cold ‘crete that was moist and smelled of garbage and urine, and the air was chill, far colder than she would ever expect in New Mexico. The people standing around her were actually all teenagers, only a few years older than she was and the speaker had an accent that made her think of the northeast.

“Listen here, cutie,” another one of them leant forward, gesturing at her with a wickedly curved knife. “We’re going to have some fun with you, and then we’re going to take your fancy clothes to sell. If you don’t fight us, all that gets hurt is your pride. A rich bitch like you should have more than your fair share of that.”

The others snickered and chuckled; one of them clutched a length of chain in his fist, another flourished a stiletto from inside his ragged clothing. Charlie rolled over and sat up, an odd feeling prodding at the corners of her mind. Primal and wordless, it was a feeling that sprang from the depths of the predator/prey relationship. It was a feeling that these creatures who all thought that they were the former were about to become the latter. The last sensation Charlie remembered before she plummeted into darkness again was exultation. She felt powerful, vital, and right, as though set free into her native element. She felt alive and exuberant and godlike, and then she felt no more.

Lionel crouched behind a dumpster, watched Bowtie’s gang surround the girl. He had radioed Bang-Bang to let them know that the rival gang was on their turf, but she was in the middle of a shakedown with Smoke and Ruthy, and it would be some time before she could make it to the 6th Street alley. He was no gunner and no brawler, and he wasn’t about to interfere with Bowtie and his crew in the midst of them getting feral with some fresh meat from the suit world. When the girl turned into an eight feet tall monster, he almost passed out. She had sat up and, even from this far away down the alley, he could see that she was acting strangely. She didn’t plead or cry or do any of the other things you would expect of a girl being got at by five street thugs. She simply looked around at them all.

Then one of them lunged for her, and it was after that Lionel’s stomach seemed to twist like a wet towel being wrung out. From behind the girl’s head a mass of leathery flesh crawled out around her body. The air in the alleyway seemed to thicken, congealing in his lungs, as the leathery growth seemed to envelop the girl, swelling and twisting and writhing. Then it rocketed up to a towering height, and the mass easily tripled, its chest broadening and its limbs lengthening. The head manifested a massive central eye that glittered with a freakish light, and its proportions morphed into some alien anatomy not of this world. With a shriek that was part vampire bat and part exploding steam engine, it lashed out at the punks surrounding it. The motion seemed to undo the knot in Lionel’s stomach and he felt himself gasp his first breath in what seemed like an hour, but had probably been a few seconds. By the time he had recovered his senses, Bowtie’s entire gang lay eviscerated in the alley, and the monster was vanishing. Lionel blinked his eyes hard to clear them as he watched the creature shrink and unravel itself from around the girl, and then crawl back behind her neck and disappear. She stood for a second in the middle of the blood-bathed alley, unsteady and staring out with sightless eyes, before she collapsed once more onto the ‘crete.

Without knowing exactly why he was doing it, Lionel rushed to her side, already wondering how he was going to explain this to Bang-Bang.

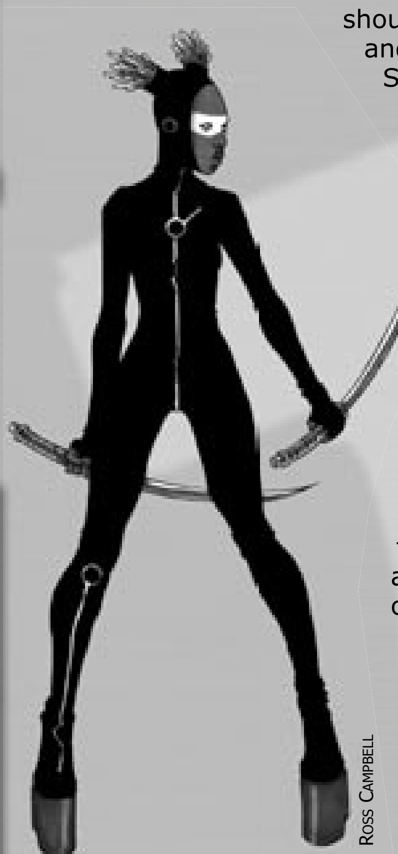
MERCS

Mercs – it could be your credits that are attracting them or they are working to their own secret agenda, but everyone needs a little help now and again. This selection of characters can give your crew a boost and provide some very nasty surprises for your opponent.

No more than 25% of your crew's total points' value can be Mercs or Ronin.

SHADOW ASSASSIN

Not all Dravani are in agreement with the direction their race has taken. From the very beginning, after the first sentient life of another species was taken, there were those who declared that this was wrong and not the Dravani way. Unfortunately, those voices were very few compared to the millions who thirsted for conquest, but those voices have never gone away. If anything, since the incident of the far planet and the 'creation' of the Souless, their numbers have risen, although the Dravani military and aristocracy largely remains free of such radical thinking. Even amongst the few who came to Earth, there were those who were dissenters; those who said the Dravani should reveal themselves and work with mankind. Still few in number, and ignored by the majority, they see Earth as the perfect opportunity and have decided to take action now that the odds are not as overwhelmingly against them. The Shadow Assassins belong to their militant arm that was formed in the early part of the 21st century with the objective of thwarting Dravani operations at every possible opportunity.



Ross Campbell

SHADOW ASSASSIN DATA

Class: Alien

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV
6	3	3	4	4	5

Points: 46 **Armor:** 1

				-2	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

Beam Pistol

The creature's flesh bubbled as it tried desperately to extinguish itself. "See, I told you I knew how to deal with these things," she said

Range:	6"	**Damage:**	5d6 P1 (energy)
Special:	Critical Fire – on the roll of a 6 during damage the model has caught fire.		

Katana

Range:	Close Combat only	**Damage:**	5d6 P1
Special:	Parry - model may add +2 to their CCA score in close combat, but if their score is greater than their opponent they do no damage and the combat is considered a draw.		

SKILLS & ABILITIES:

- Flurry
- Shrug-it-Off
- Swift
- Regenerate
- Sufferance

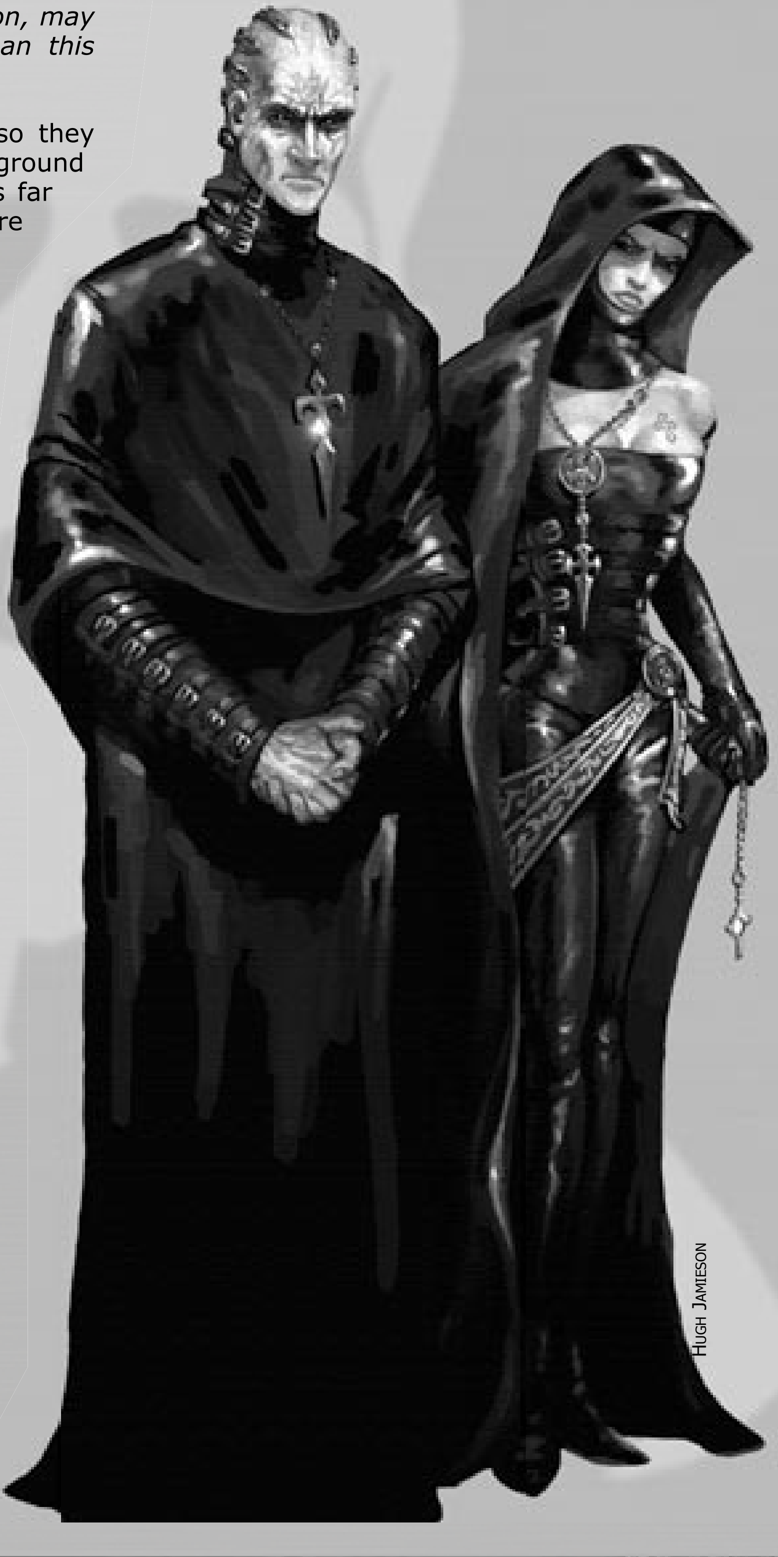
Crew Allowance: 0-1

The Shadow Assassin cannot be used in a Dravani crew.

THE CARDINAL & SISTER CARMINE

"It may not seem like it now, but it's for your own good - in fact, it's for everyone's. Just think, Lars, you could be remembered as a hero rather than a murderer and petty thief. Unfortunately, you won't be remembered at all. Goodbye, Mr. Erickson, may the next life look more kindly on you than this one."

The Vatacina is based on impartiality, or so they say, but rumors are growing in the underground of a secret agenda that their work involves far more than just the advertised mediation. More and more stories are circulating of Vatacina operatives joining teams from the CSO to the Ronin, and one name continually bubbles to the surface - the Cardinal. His real name is not known, but his ruthlessness is. Always accompanied by Sister Carmine, the Cardinal seems to have been walking a tightrope between helping the forces of order and throwing his lot in with the criminal elements. An investigation was started, but as no evidence of the actual existence of the Cardinal or Sister Carmine was ever found, it was stopped – marked down as just another case of the media creating more phantoms for their own sake and wasting Unipol time. Yet the rumors still circulate, of how he is searching for something and will stop at nothing to achieve his goal. Grid postings from various crews tell of how the Sister and the Cardinal just turn up, apparently without being hired by anyone; they know all the details of the assignment and they are accepted without question, but in all cases they disappear before evac. One thing that everyone is agreed upon is that if the Cardinal chooses to join you, you would be a fool to refuse his assistance - that is if you had the choice.



THE CARDINAL DATA

Class: Human

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV	CRFT
4	1	1	2	3	5	5

Points: 54 **Armor:** 2

			-1	-2	D

CRAFT POWERS

Divinate:
He knew exactly where they were going to attack us from every time - it was uncanny.

Special: Once per round, one friendly model or team within 4” of the Cardinal may re-roll a failed to hit or damage roll. All dice for the model have to be re-rolled and the second result stands even if the score is worse than the original one. If you choose to use the re-roll with a team, you do not have to re-roll the whole team’s dice, but can choose to use it on individual team model rolls as you wish.

Ignite:
You have been found wanting and must be punished for your transgressions.

Target Number: 9

Range: 14" **Damage:** 4d6 (energy)

Special: Critical Fire – on the roll of a 6 during damage the model has caught fire.

A model must roll a 4, 5 or 6 during the control phase to put itself out or it will automatically take 1 point of damage. Models on fire will move randomly during the control phase.

Mental Blast:
I thought the old man was toast for sure! This huge thing just jumped up from the canal right next to him, but then its head exploded like a melon. Nobody even fired a shot, and man, that old guy… well, he never even looked in its direction.

Target Number: 10

Range: 12" **Damage:** 4d6

Special: Telepathic Craft attack. Ignores Armor

Quicksand:

Target Number: 10

Range: 18"

Special: 5” Blast template. Models or teams within or touching the template may only move at half speed and cannot charge. Template stays in play until user decides to remove it or attempts to use the power again.

Crew Allowance: 0-1
Named character
Can only be hired with Sister Carmine

SISTER CARMINE DATA

Class: Human

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV	CRFT
6	2	3	2	3	4	3

Points: 71 **Armor:** 2

			-1	-2	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

Reliquary Amplifier:

Range: Close Combat only **Damage:** 4d6 P1

Special: The Reliquary Amplifier adds +1 to all friendly models attempting any Craft-based roll within 6” of it.

CRAFT POWERS

Possess:
Jones suddenly went stiff; turning slowly to face his team, he pulled a grenade from his belt, flipped the pin and dropped it casually at his feet.

Range: 18"

Special: Telepathic Craft attack. If successful, model may take over a living target and may immediately activate and take an action with them. The user may release the model in the control phase or continue to possess it during the following round. If not released the possessed model may attempt to free itself by making a successful NRV check. While possessing a model, the user is considered prone and cannot move or take any other action.

Quicksand:
It was like our feet were sinking into the tarmac; it sucked and pulled at us, but when I looked down, it seemed as solid as rock!

Target Number: 10

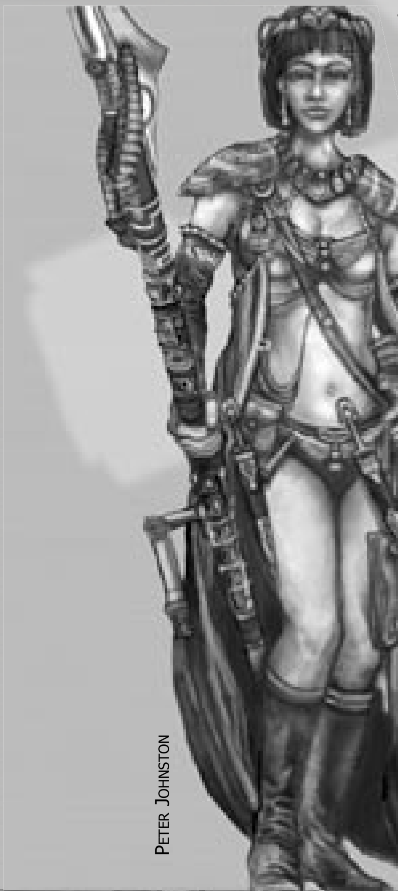
Range: 18"

Special: 5” Blast template. Models or teams within or touching the template may only move at half speed and cannot charge. Template stays in play until user decides to remove it or attempts to use the power again.

Crew Allowance: 0-1
Named character
Can only be hired with The Cardinal

EMISSARY OF THE EMPIRE

After the Pale Horse quarantine was lifted from the African nations at the end of 2079 and trade resumed with the newly found Nile Empire in 2080, contact has only been mercantile in nature, with all borders being closed to foreigners and all communications being conducted electronically. That was the case until January 12th 2174, when an official request was received for one of their Emissaries to accompany the CSO and learn from their activities. The CSO protested at non-members being allowed to accompany them, especially those that had for almost a hundred years been aggressively pursuing a policy of isolation. Unipol, however, was adamant and for the very same reasons, claiming that this could be the first step in building better relations with the Empire and the Emissary must be accommodated at all costs – but at the same time could they find out as much about the Empire as possible! Very little new information was known about the Nile Empire apart from how they had miraculously leapt ahead with their technology. Surprisingly enough, however, the Emissary made herself extremely useful on a number of CSO assignments, and since then the program has been officially green lighted and a number of other Emissaries have been 'welcomed' into various precincts. It was only recently, however, that Unipol found out they were not privileged in this situation and the Emissary had also been working with Asia Pacific, the Commonwealth and even Ronin crews. These facts were either overlooked or ignored as Unipol and its Board had its own agenda too, although all request to stations officers with their Empire equivalents were categorically denied. This strange arrangement has continued longer than most would have thought, especially as the Emissaries will only participate in certain assignments. Yet not only have they proved themselves extremely useful in the field, their technology is years ahead of what is currently available and is often still only purely theoretical in the west! All attempts to extract information have failed completely, but there is hope that in time the Empire will share its secrets. Initially, it was thought that the Emissaries were just a political exchange attempting to improve relations, but it is now known that they have a definite agenda, with their numbers continually increasing as if the Empire is getting more desperate to achieve its goals. Emissaries have recently turned up in Serenity City, the orbital cities and even as far out as Mars - in fact, it is said that they are looking less like Emissaries and more like an army!



EMISSARY OF THE EMPIRE DATA

Class: Human

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV
5	3	4	3	3	4

Points: 46 **Armor:** 1

			-1	-2	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

Scarab Shield:
I shielded my eyes from the explosion. Through the noise of the blast I thought I heard a faint metallic ringing, like a million tiny gongs; as the dust died down, there she was, striding purposely forward with not on scratch on her perfect skin.

Special: Whenever a model has been hit, but before damage is rolled, roll 1d6. On a score of a 5 or 6 the model takes no damage.

Staff of Ra:
The Ronin exploded in a fiery ball in front of her; leveling her staff, she prepared to engage her remaining opponents at close quarters, though they seemed none to thrilled at the opportunity.

Range: 12" **Damage:** 5d6 P2

Special: Critical Fire – on the roll of a 6 during damage the model has caught fire. Parry in close combat +2 to defensive CCA score.

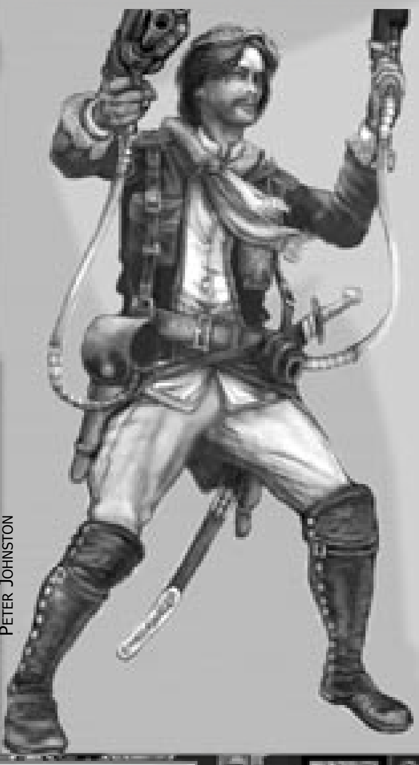
Close Combat Damage: 5d6

Crew Allowance: 0-2
Independent
An Emissary cannot be used with forces that include Dravani or Vatacina personnel in its crew.

CAPTAIN DOYLE

In the bars and trader haunts of the cluster cities and off-world colonies, there is one name that stands out when pilots and traders start swapping stories. As one of the best pilots in the Commonwealth, with a reputation for being honest and trustworthy, as well as a tendency to cross the line of the law if the need arises, Captain Doyle's reputation is more than just idle gossip.

Born in 2138 and raised as the son of Jonathon Doyle, 'Captain' Jack Doyle grew up within the Branton organization, believing Jonathon and Charlotte Doyle to be his parents. From an early age, he formed a friendship with the eccentric entrepreneur Dickie Branton, who had endless patience with him, unlike his father. Although Charlotte Doyle was a loving mother, Jonathon was hard and strict and Jack often found himself on the receiving end of his father's anger. As Jack got older, tension between his mentor and his father had become strained and the night before the launch of the Sword of the Stars, he overheard an argument that would change his life forever. It was on that night that he found out he was the bastard son of Dickie Branton and Charlotte Doyle and, as the argument came to an explosive conclusion and both men departed, a stunned Jack was left hiding in the shadows. That was the last time he saw his real father as the next day, the Sword of the Stars was launched and Dickie vanished. Jack suspected sabotage for he had seen the wormhole experiments working successfully many times in the lab, but he said nothing, letting the suspicion and hatred just fester inside himself. Eventually he confronted his stepfather and the ensuing argument culminated in Jack walking out and leaving the safety of the Branton Organization. He joined the Commonwealth Navy on the Earth to Mars route and later received promotion to Captain with his own ship to carry out his duties to the Crown. Over the years, he has been known to be available to move cargo that nobody else would touch, always willing to take the risk if the reward was worth the price. Although he has been caught a number of times, he has always managed to get away with a warning, a fact that has earned him his reputation as the luckiest pilot alive. Captain Jack's hatred for his stepfather has never diminished and he has vowed to find out what happened to the Sword of the Stars and bring Jonathon Doyle to justice, if it is the last thing he does. Meanwhile…. Captain Doyle is available for hire to those with the credits.



Peter Johnston

CAPTAIN DOYLE DATA

Class: Human

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV	REP
5	4	4	3	3	5	3

Points: 52 **Armor**:2

			-1	-2	D

WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT:

Combat Knife

Range: Close Combat only **Damage:** 2d6

Dual Soft Pistols

Designed for combat in space, the Soft Pistol is lethal at close range on an unarmored foe and can be used with no danger of piercing the hull.

Range: 12" **Damage:** 5d6 (Energy)

Special: May choose to fire twice per turn at -1 RCA per shot or once as normal.

EMP Grenade

Range: Thrown (BDY+5") **Damage:** 4d6 P0(3)

Special: 3" Blast template

Only affects robots and does half damage to cyborgs - does NO damage to other models.

Smoke Grenades

Range: Thrown (BDY+5") **Damage:** None

Special: Smoke Grenade template. Blocks line of sight.

Roll 1d6 each control phase smoke stays in play to see what happens to the template; 1-3 remove template; 4-5 template stays in play. Roll again next control phase; 6 moves randomly.

SKILLS & ABILITIES:

- Luck
- Snap Shot
- Run 'n' Gun

Crew Allowance: 0-1

Named character

Captain Doyle cannot be used in a Dravani Crew.

TOXIC ZOMBIE

One of the most prevalent forms of mutation to have appeared in the last quarter of a century is actually a highly developed mutagenic virus that has been generically classified as homo fatalis, although its sufferers are more commonly known by the media and the masses as Toxic Zombies. Many believe this to be the successor to Pale Horse, but not much is actually known about the origins of the deadly epidemic that is sweeping the wastelands, except that it is highly contagious. There have even been several cases that have reached the outer cities, causing whole blocks to be cordoned off by Unipol and the occupants 'cleansed'. The virus appears to be in a continual process of mutation and many in the scientific community have said it is currently impossible to create even a vaccine, far less a cure. There is some cause for hope, however, as some of the mutant gangs in the Badlands appear to be immune to its effects, even using the Toxic Zombies as skirmish troops, driving them in front of the gang when raiding larger targets. Incubation can take anything from seconds to days and is usually caused by cuts or bites from an infected source, which is one of the reasons that cases have not become more widespread and threatened the population of the whole world. Once the virus inhabits an organism, it will immediately attack the higher brain functions, leaving just the most primitive instincts, primarily the desire to feed. This is the way the virus uses living organisms to propagate, and is, to the majority of people, the most horrific part with family, friends and loved ones falling on each other, and even mothers ripping their own children apart to satisfy their hunger. Attempts to wipe it out completely have always failed, as all it takes is one infected person in a populated area to continue the spread of the disease, increasing the infected exponentially. The bodies of those infected can sustain terrible physical injuries and still remain active for days before they finally give out. The only sure way of making one stay down is to remove its head - preferably in many pieces!

TOXIC ZOMBIE DATA

Class: Beast

MVE	RCA	CCA	SAG	BDY	NRV
4	-	2	0	6	-

Armor: 0

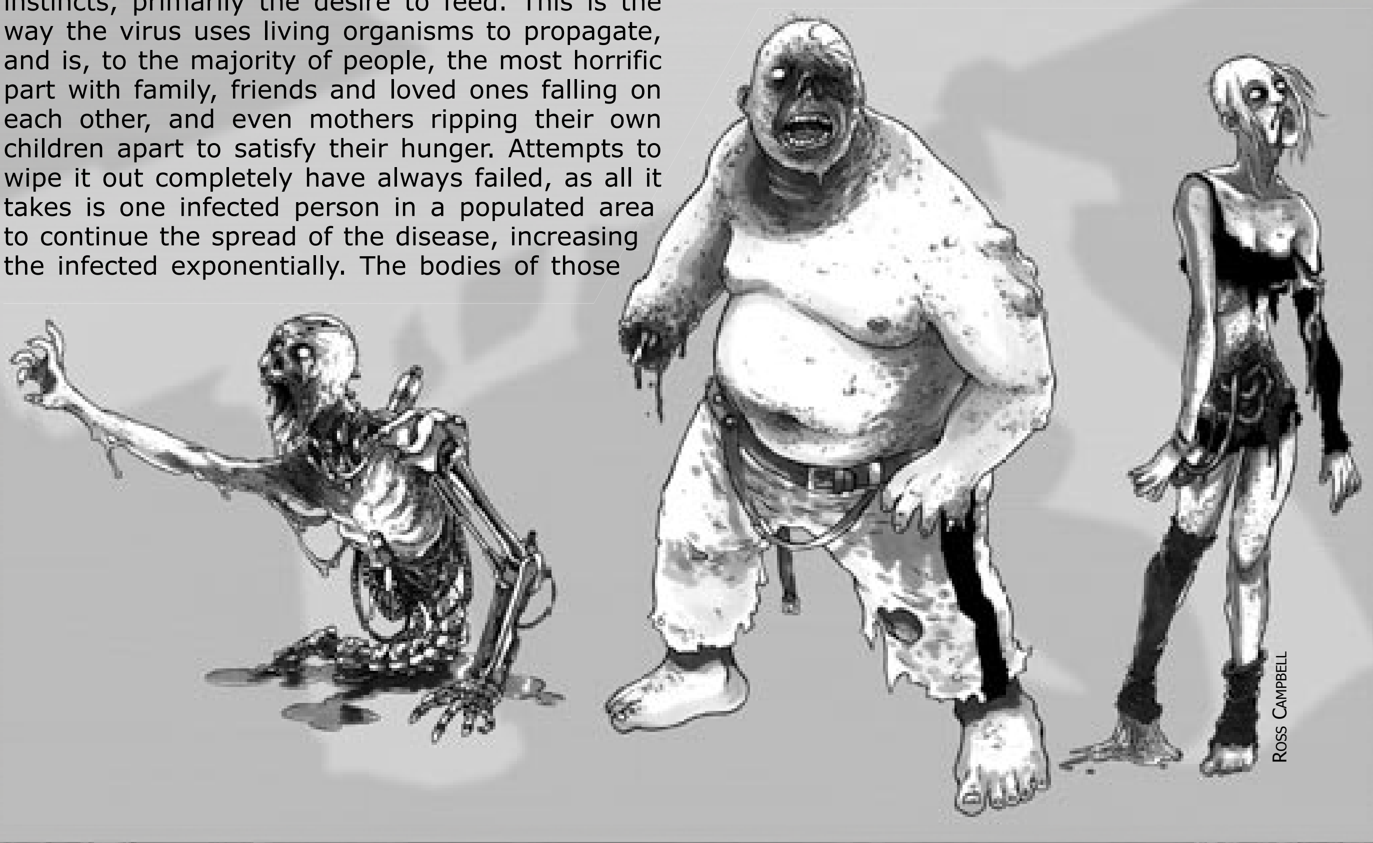
		D

SKILLS & ABILITIES:

- Contagious Claws
- Random Movement
- Dead
- Swarm

We poured shot after shot into it, blowing chunks of diseased flesh from its bones, and yet it kept coming.

Crew Allowance: 0
Toxic Zombies cannot be purchased as Mercs for a crew; they are cataloged here for players to use in their assignments to add a random element and some extra danger. For details on how to use them in your games, check out the campaign Research and Destroy in the Mission Manual section of this book.



Ross Campbell

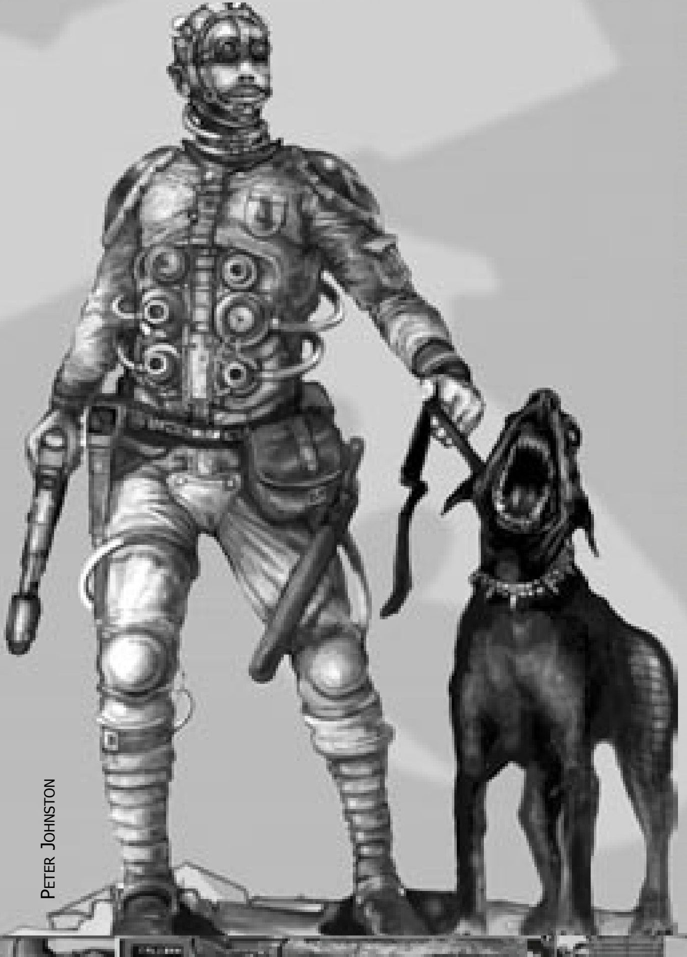
SECURICLONES

SecuriClones are a misnomer, as they are not really clones at all. Traditionally called replicants, they are a blend of organic, vat-grown tissue and organs, blended with cyber-technology. No freethinking actions are allowed; in fact, half the ‘brain’ is actually a simple processor that allows individual organizations or corporations to directly program and control their actions. SecuriClones are now the only type of replicant allowed to be in production and, due to public unease with the term, are referred to as clones.

With the dawning of sentient AI in the 22nd century and the birth of the Robot Rights Movement in 2136, man turned his ingenuity towards manufacturing "man plus" as they were referred to. The SecuriClones are a distant cousin to these original designs, as man in his brilliance progressed to create something even more amazing. They were faster, stronger and smarter than him, yet created in his own image to wage his wars, work his mines, and even gratify his carnal needs.

Within two decades they numbered in their millions and an underground resistance was forming, to which man, with all his wisdom, was oblivious. Fortunately, their creators at Yuuto were not complete idiots and had installed tiny fragmentation devices at the base of each replicant’s spine…. apart from one. She was a custom pleasure geisha designed and built by Professor Tomohiro Kosuge, the founder and head of the replicant program. It was only a matter of time before the resistance found her; living a life of privilege and isolation within the Yuuto archology, she had no idea of the hardship her brothers and sisters had to endure. At that first meeting, she willingly promised to get the code that would deactivate the devices; the headless body of Professor Kosuge was found shortly after, and the girl, herself, was gone. Kosuge, or rather his head, gave a recorded statement on all channels that evening, admitting that he had been wrong in his part of replicant suppression - all they wanted was their freedom, which they were willing to fight and die for if necessary. He also admitted that he had aided them in the deactivation of their restraints.

What happened next is history; after a number of very bloody skirmishes, the replicants hijacked a number of sleeper ships and headed out of our Solar System. A strong military contingent suggested blowing them out of the sky, seeing them as a potential threat in the future. For once, however, reason prevailed; maybe we were ashamed, maybe we saw a lost reflection of ourselves in their innocence, or maybe we were simply scared we would lose against our own creations and the roles of master and servant would become reversed. It was finally decided to let them leave in peace.



Peter Johnston

SIBLING RIVALRY

The massive corporate juggernaut that is Asia Pacific has been created over the last several hundred years, the product of an evolution that began with the Yoshino samurai family in feudal Japan. Throughout the centuries, this same family has been the driving force behind Asia Pacific. Even now, when it has transcended from a mere corporation to become a nation unto itself, APAC still has, as an integral part of its constitution, the leadership of the organization as the unassailable privilege of the Yoshino family. The head of the family is also the president of Asia Pacific in both its political and corporate incarnations. The President chooses his heir-successor and his decision is immutable. Tradition has always dictated that the heir be the eldest son of the current president, passing the helm down from generation to generation of Yoshino men. This system has worked remarkably well for the organization for many hundreds of years, but of late it has encountered…resistance.

When Hirumi Yoshino was forced to retire due to illness in late 2071, he passed the presidency on to his eldest son, Takashi, perpetuating the tradition of his forefathers. A new variable, however, had entered the Yoshino family and it interfered with the smooth execution of this inheritance. Although Takashi was, in fact, Hirumi's eldest son, he was not the old man's eldest child. Mitsumi Yoshino, the former President's daughter, was Takashi's older sister. As the eldest child, she felt that, despite tradition, it was her place to inherit the company and she had been preparing herself for this for many years. Hirumi, however, steeped in the family traditions and customs, had never even considered passing the leadership of his family's legacy to a woman. Even in the last decades of the 21st century, ancient and outdated chauvinism persisted in many places and, despite the views held by Mitsumi, the President's choice of a successor was not subject to dispute or revision. So Takashi took over the family organization with all the business savvy and self-confidence of a man who was heir to a centuries-old empire of wealth and power. He set out to establish personal recognition throughout APAC in a series of strategic conferences and progress inspection tours.

For months, Takashi engendered increasing respect and confidence amongst the Board of Directors and the Parliament of Asia Pacific, handling both business and political obstacles with equal aplomb. April 30 of 2072, however, marked the occasion of a tragedy that would change the internal mechanics of Asia Pacific forever. During a tour of a new fiber-optics manufacturing plant in the northwest corner of the Hunan province, the fuel canister of a cutting torch ruptured and ignited, causing a catastrophic explosion. Takashi's bodyguards and security personnel were quick to react to remove the executive, but it was too late. The tank had detonated not four meters from the new President and he was ravaged by both fire and shrapnel. He never had a chance.

What many thought, but none had the courage to suggest aloud, was that Mitsumi had orchestrated the explosion, as was, indeed, the case. Using a clandestine network of those who supported her claim to the leadership of Asia Pacific, most of whom had been promised rich rewards in exchange for their treachery, the embittered sister had orchestrated a complex system of intelligence gathering. They had infiltrated Takashi's planners and support staff, learning advance details of his movements, and eventually setting the trap for him in the Hunan factory. Within hours of Takashi's 'accident', the Board contacted Mitsumi; she was now the only senior member of the Yoshino family able to take control of the company.

They had no choice, but to officially request that she accept the position of President, effective immediately. Mitsumi, of course, accepted her charge with the proper amount of regret and grieving, as well as modesty regarding her own ability to do the job – an attitude that was immediately refuted by the energy that she unleashed into her new role. With incredible proficiency, the woman who considered herself the true heiress of Asia Pacific grasped the helm and wrenched it to her own direction. With hardly a pause for breath, she made moves to acquire up-and-coming new technology companies, trimmed excesses from myriad divisions of APAC's manufacturing branch, and conducted internal reorganization that eliminated over 36,000 middle management positions. Mitsumi swiftly became very popular with the Board of Directors.

For the next two years, Asia Pacific continued doing what it did best. It dominated its fields of investment, improved the economic infrastructure of its state, and continued to grow and spread like corporate ivy. Mitsumi grew comfortable and secure in her new position, especially having eliminated all but her two of the closest co-conspirators in her plot to execute her brother. Just as it seemed as if affairs of APAC had stabilized and grown secure, another 'situation' occurred…..

During a meeting of the Ruling Council, made up of the highest officers of the state Parliament and the corporate Board of Directors, Takashi returned. So monumental as to be unbelievable to most members of the Council, Takashi made his way from the sidewalk in Kyoto all the way to the Council's boardroom without raising a single alarm, passing through countless retinal and DNA scanners along the way. His identification had been verified a thousand times over before he had even entered the room, which was good, because otherwise he would never have been recognized. Takashi had not, in fact, died in the explosion two years prior, but he had come incredibly close. He had suffered grievous burns to the majority of his left side, including horrific scarring of his face and irreparable damage to his left arm. The damage to his face he revealed only briefly, removing an ornate Kabuki-style theatrical mask to display his wounds to the assembled Council only for a moment. He had acquired many such masks to cover the terrible scarring he had suffered, and had taken to wearing one at all times. The worst of his other injuries, his mangled left arm, had been replaced with a cybernetic replica as even the most advanced reconstructive surgical procedures had been unable to restore the injured limb. He now bore an arm of glistening chromed steel, a true testament to Asia Pacific's technical prowess.

Takashi informed the Council that he had been kept in seclusion, under guard and in secret for the previous two years by a special division of Asia Pacific unknown to anyone but the President. It operated outside the authority of the Board and did not appear on any official APAC ledger or record. It had been formed two hundred years ago, and had rarely been needed, but in a situation such as this had proved essential in saving the life of the President. This agency, unknown to his own sister as it was part of the inheritance process, had spirited the injured Takashi away in the chaos of the accident, swiftly replacing all bodyguards who had been present at the incident and supplying a cosmetically-altered substitute for Takashi's funeral services.

What Takashi kept from the board was that, whilst the secret services had kept his whereabouts and very existence a total secret, and had stabilized his physical condition, they were at a complete loss as to how to treat the terrible damage to his body. The truth of the matter was that they were chronically underfunded and had become complacent in their duties. In their 200 years of existence, their services had rarely been called upon, and as APAC blossomed and stabilized as a corporate state, they felt secure in the knowledge that the leadership of the family was unassailable in its fortress of loyalty and honor. What they had failed to take into account was the devastating effect of sibling rivalry, which had left them with a comatose President and without the ability to revive and repair him. APAC's own enormous resources could not be used for fear of alerting whoever had planted the explosives. Takashi had been spirited away and was being kept on the Kamchatka Peninsula in a refitted gulag that had lain forgotten for almost 200 years since the fall of communism. As time progressed, they had become desperate, almost to the point at which they were willing to reveal themselves to Mitsumi.

Finally, there was a glimmer of hope when they received information that a recent incursion into a Xenone facility had discovered certain pertinent

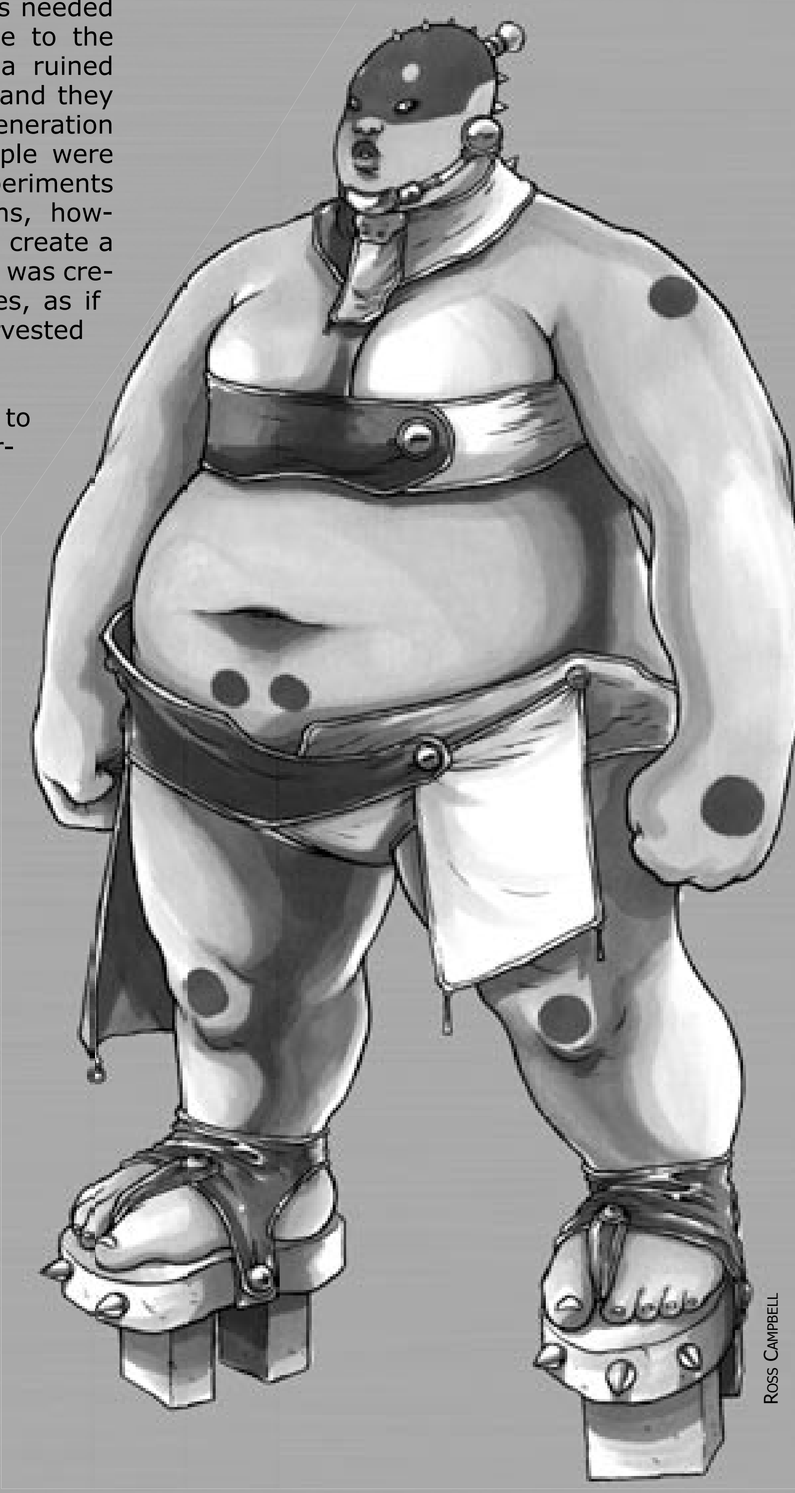
Jaime Jones

facts that could save their master's life. It seemed that Xenon might be able to provide a solution, so clandestine negotiations were swiftly made with Xenone, who were more than willing to oblige. They were not aware of Takashi's identity, but they knew that the work they were committing to could be advantageous to the future of both corporations. The result was the construction of a new facility for Xenone built on the Kamchatka Peninsula alongside the old gulag, using some of Takashi's personal fortune. Having set up the necessary facilities needed to save their charge, his defenders came to the conclusion that Takashi was trapped in a ruined physical form that could not be repaired, and they decided that some form of genetic regeneration or replication was necessary. Tissue sample were taken from his recumbent form and experiments with cloning began. After several months, however, it was discovered that they could not create a refreshed physical form as every clone that was created retained evidence of Takashi's injuries, as if the very soul of the cells that had been harvested were scarred beyond repair.

Accepting they would have to be content to use a clone with a scarred physical appearance, they set out to complete the replica's growth acceleration. Finally, Takashi could be linked to his new 'body' and, for the first time in 18 months, he was out of his life-support, albeit only as a puppet master. While his wrecked physical form lay suspended and unconscious within the cold walls of the gulag, his marionette could once more claim what was rightfully his.

Even though she was caught entirely off-guard by his unexpected return, Mitsumi appeared outwardly nonplussed. Furious at her brother's return and suspicious of some kind of fraud, she had little choice but to express false joy and very real amazement at his survival. Blindsided by his return and confronted by the inevitable, Mitsumi abdicated her presidency to her brother - an exquisitely forged smile on her face.

Asia Pacific's laws clearly stated that Takashi Yoshino was the legal President of the corporate state until death or resignation and he had clearly shown that he now intended to resume his position. Some members of the Board, however, were unhappy about his return as Mitsumi's progressive ideas and policies had breathed new life into APAC. Anyone close to her knew her anger at having had her presidency usurped, and so within the towering powerhouse of Asia Pacific, there now festers a cancer. The rot of dissent is eating away at centuries of solidarity as the faction's of each Yoshino sibling now wages a clandestine war within the state. Publicly, they totally support each other, but behind the façade of public relations and marketing glitz, each suspects the other of a secret agenda. It seems as if Asia Pacific will only truly be able to move on when just one sibling remains.



FIELD GUIDE: TACTICS

The forces in Rezolution present players with almost unlimited tactical options - just by adding a new model with a different skill set can change the entire dynamics of your crew. Forces can, and should, be tailored for different assignments and factions, and players should feel free to experiment and design their forces as they wish. One of the benefits of Rezolution is its flexibility and the player's control of crew composition. You may wish to design your Ronin around close combat tactics and therefore focus on Fists and Brick to deliver the devastating hitting power rather than the ranged abilities of the Shootist. What is presented here is a selection of tips for players to help you on the road to victory - the future of your crew is entirely in your hands.

THE RONIN

Each member of a Ronin crew is an army of one, able to take on multiple opponents and leave them strewn across the battlefield in their wake. Playing the Ronin, you will always find yourself outnumbered and, although this can be challenging, the Ronin are more than equipped to deal with it. The Maven is a good all-rounder, but his REP can be vital in your victory; being able to choose to go first or forcing a specific model of your opponents to do so, can be essential to a Ronin player's game plan especially when (at the beginning at least!) you will be outnumbered by two to one in most cases!

The Shootists should be considered the core of your force as each one can lay down a withering barrage of fire, taking out multiple opponents in one turn. It should also not be overlooked that they are independent models and can be used as such rather than as a team. This can be used to your advantage as, although you may be outnumbered on a model to model basis, running your crew as independents allows you to out-manoeuvre most opponents by outnumbering them in activations - although you will be giving up the chance to activate and fire numerous models in one turn.

Movement of your Ghost on the table is very important as you do not have the luxury of disposable troops like other forces to shield him, so keeping him out of harm's way and using cover effectively is essential. The Ghost is one of the best hackers in the game, but to really utilize him in an assignment, he needs to get to an HPT and get hardwired as soon as possible because on the Grid, he dominates.

The Brick is the heavy workhorse of the crew, able to hold an entire flank or punch a gaping hole through enemy defences by himself. The Fist is one of the most dangerous close combat models in the game with his speed and CCA attribute combined with Killing Blow - just make sure they do not get too far ahead and end up isolated where the enemy can train a sufficient amount of firepower on them to take them out. To counter this, and also make best use of the Fist's abilities, try and get into close combat range of as many enemy models as possible when you charge. Adding an Esper or two to your crew provides you with a very valuable wild card and many of their abilities do not even require line of sight. One of their most useful abilities is Jaunt, as this ability alone has the potential to turn a game for you.

CSO

The key to a successful CSO deployment is teamwork; no matter how you want to build your force, the CSO is all about the team. Always build the teams to the maximum number of models allowed and add models with Leadership if available. Like any military force, if a team is in command range and able to receive orders, it will be able to operate at maximum efficiency. When speed is not vital, use the Hold order and make your teams support each other, one giving covering fire as the other advances. Concentrating your fire is another CSO must; a team of 10 using this order will annihilate a single target no matter how tough it seems to be.

The Marshal is the epitome of a great leader; he is one of the best independents in the game and he really packs a punch at range with the Hammerhead assault pistol. The CSO Marshals do not know the meaning of surrender or just when to lie down and die! If you are unfortunate enough to get your Marshal damaged, you can hope your luck is in with his Legendary ability, which can keep him in the game as even an injured Marshal is more than a match for most!

The core of the CSO are the Troopers; there is not a basic troop type in the game that has the range or the firepower of the humble CSO Trooper and do not forget that they all come with Smoke Grenades as standard! A few of those in strategic places can ruin your opponent's plan for a round and change the line of sight on a table dramatically. Make sure you keep your troops spread out, as a well-placed grenade or template weapon can devastate a tightly-packed team leaving little but smoking boots, so make the most of that 3” coherency rule. Rangers are another great choice to a basic force, as not only are they great infiltration troops with specialist weapons, but they all have the HAK attribute. Even though the CSO has the lowest HAK attributes in the game, you can have at least double the amount of the other factions and they can also stand their own in a fight unlike a Ghost, Wraith or Yuurei!

Peace Keepers are an essential part of a larger CSO crew, more agile, better shots and they have a better chance than the basic trooper if close combat is required. These should be one of the first teams you add when you wish to expand your core force. Supplement them with a Major and they are ready to take on all-comers, but as with the Troopers, keep them spread out and beware of template weapons.

Once you have a core force together, it is time to bring in the big guns and by that I mean the Stompers. Not only are they one of the hardest models to damage in the game, but they come equipped with two support weapons that they move and fire both in one turn! At the opposite end of the spectrum are the Penal Troopers and these reprobates should not be overlooked for, as they are some of the lowest point value models out there, your opponent will often overlook them, enabling you to work some devastating flanking attacks. They also work very effectively as a screen for your other troops and, if they do reach the enemy intact, a close range SMG burst can make short work of most opponents - and did I mention these guys and girls also have a habit of exploding!

APAC

The forces of the Asia Pacific incorporated state represent an interesting set of tactical options quite unlike the other factions in Rezolution. They lack the long-range firepower of the CSO, the durability of the Dravani and the individual heroism of the Ronin. The field in which they excel is that of short-range brutality and massed close combat and at their core are the Enforcer teams, which are the only basic model types in the game that have a choice of weapons and also a high CCA!

The foundation parts of any APAC crew are the Arashi and a team of Enforcers; as well as being a necessity, they also represent the source of much of the faction's tactical power, so think about fielding at least two squads of Enforcers augmented by Lieutenants and at least one Heavy. Although they only have a short range, Shotguns are devastating and the Shotgun blast also compensates for the Enforcer's low RCA; with two teams you can afford to sacrifice the long-range assault of one team and make them into a lethal assault squad. The chance to wield Dual Machine Pistols should not be overlooked as this means 16 shots from an eight-man team, enough to even the odds and be psychologically harassing for your opponent.

The Arashi is the corner stone of APAC success; with his devastating electrical attacks he can be overwhelming, particularly to the energy-loathing Dravani. However, be sure to activate his Storm Shield before advancing into the enemy, otherwise you will soon find yourself leaderless. Having carefully planned your basic building blocks, it is time to start adding flavour and finesse with the specialists at your disposal. There is nothing more amusing than watching a squad of Troopers falter in the face of the Bishoujo Senshi as she systematically rips them apart. Another essential part of any APAC force are the TADS; due to their speed and ability to ignore almost all terrain, they make excellent flanking forces that can quickly exploit your opponent's weak spots and capture high ground from which to unleash a deadly barrage.

If dealing with an opponent who relies on Espers, then the Numb Sisters make an excellent counter to their skills, effectively shutting them down. The Ninja do what Ninja have always done - get in fast and close without being detected and then carefully slide the killing blade between their target's ribs with fatal ease. Throughout all of this careful planning and execution, be very aware of your Yuurei, as although they can be the key point of your success in an assignment, they also represent a weakness that will need your other forces to protect them and get them into position.

DRAVANI

The Dravani are one of the hardest forces to master in a Dark Tomorrow, but are potentially the most deadly of all the factions presented here. The key elements are obviously the Dravani themselves and their ability to regenerate up to a block of damage per turn, but they can also drain a victim of its life essence or even restore themselves by feeding off one of their many Vassals - even a dead Dravani may not stay that way for long! The Dravani are almost completely without long-range weaponry and even their Vassals are minimally equipped with ranged firepower - the Dravani prefer to be up close and personal when they attack. The first target for Dravani players must be any of your opponent's models that are armed with energy weapons or abilities. As long as they are in Leadership range, the Dravani and their followers, unlike other factions, do not have to worry about those annoying Morale tests from taking wounds or suppressing fire, so they can advance implacably forward.

Souless make perfect assassins, as they cannot be targeted at long-range, ignore terrain and are the perfect antidote to those enemy models with high BDY, Armor and a not-so-good NRV! The Souless can also be used to deal with mission-critical models that usually hide away at the back of a crew, like Ghosts. Going after an opponent's hacker will also give them more to worry about while your Wraith can slip onto a HPT unnoticed and complete the assignment, hopefully without opposition.

You can almost never have enough Vassals; the Lektra Vassals are the cheapest basic troop and, although they are not the best combatants, get enough models into close combat and suddenly your opponent will find his models of a higher points' value lying stunned all over the table awaiting the following round to be finished off! Shamblers are very slow compared to the majority of the Dravani forces, but provide perfect cover and can act as a wall for more vulnerable models or those that maybe you do not want damaged early in the game. The Volkoda is another perfect Dravani killing machine and with its Scout ability, it is tempting to engage the enemy as soon as possible. It is best, however, to try and use it to outflank your opponent and harass him from the sides, so he is suddenly having to deal with a mass of Vassals descending upon him. The Dravani are all about close combat and you have just got to make sure that your deadliest models can make it through the enemy fire - but with a bit of practice, you will soon find your opponents bending to your will!

SKILLS & ABILITIES

Berserk:
Nothing could stop him, the best we could do was to get out of the way!

Rolls an additional damage die in close combat; can never Parry. If it kills all its combatants, must immediately move and attack the NEAREST model within its MVE range. If none available, turn ends as normal

Built for Battle:
"It's no us; I can't penetrate its armor!"

When this model rolls for fatal damage on the 1d6 roll of 3-6 it remains in play; on the roll of 1-2 it is considered dead and removed from play as normal.

Catlike:
Her body twisted, unnaturally graceful, somehow she managed to land on her feet, poised, balanced and unharmed.

Roll 3d6 and choose the two highest for SAG based tests. Fall damage is halved.

Conduit:
"I am an extension of our masters' will - you will obey me as them."

Extends the range of Presence and Feed for Dravani models by an additional 6" from model. Conduit model must be within 6" of model with Presence and Feed. Additional 6" extends from conduit model.

Contagious Claws:
Just the slightest scratch from those grime-infested claws could be enough to doom me to the same fate.

If an opponent's model dies in close combat with damage sustained from Contagious Claws, replace them with a Toxic Zombie. This does not apply to bots or other non-organic life-forms.

Controller:
The bots raced into the facility to await the silent commands of their controller.

Model may control up to 3 Bomb-bots or 2 Medibots. Bots must be purchased individually.

Daniel Neft (Order #28803764)

Controller (Specialty):
Model may control up to 2 Medibots.

Dead:
It had no mind to manipulate; there was just a sense of primitive urges.

Cannot be affected by telepathic powers.

Dead Zone:
He felt like he was drowning in sand, smothered, suffocating. He tried to concentrate but all he could feel was the overpowering panic.

Any Craft power targeted withing 4" of the Numb Sisters is neutralized on a roll of 4+ and has no effest. Other Craft users cannot use their powers within 4" of a Numb Sister. Numb Sisters cannot be targeted by Mind War attacks.

Dervish:
She danced amongst her attackers; no matter how many there were she always had the advantage.

Multiple attackers gain no additional benefit in close combat against this model.

Drain:
I could see the skin stretching across the bone; it was if he was aging a decade every second and there was nothing I could do to help him.

Instead of rolling damage in close combat, the model may choose to Drain - make an opposed NRV test against the model you beat. For every point over the enemy model's NRV score you roll, 1 point of damage is done with no armor saves allowed. Also 1 block on the model's Damage Gauge is healed for every point you Drain up to its starting allowance. If your opponent wins, the attack has no effect.

Feed:
The Ronin advanced, firing again and again as the effigy of a man staggered backwards until it finally fell to the floor unmoving. Returning their attention to the others, they were surprised to see one of them collapse before their eyes. Jel could feel the hairs on the back of his neck rising and it was obvious that Rog felt the same for they turned simultaneously to find the man standing. His clothes were so ragged, they could see the skin beneath where not one wound was visible; the man cricked his neck slowly and then strode purposely towards them – smiling…

A model within 6" of a Vassal may heal all blocks on their Damage Gauge to its starting value by feeding off its life-force. Even if injured by energy weapons, the model may restore their damage in this way. The Vassal is immediately removed from play. A model with this ability that is killed or fails a fatal damage roll may still heal itself up until the following control phase. If the player has not sacrificed a model by then, it is removed from play as normal. The feeding model will come back into play immediately and will not count as prone.

Flip:
Charging in, he struck at where she had been. There was no time for confusion, a sweet smell of spring flowers wafted across his nostrils and then a drumming on his back. Not unlike a massage he'd once received, he remembered, as he slowly slid to his knees, his shirt wet and dripping. Although they hadn't used as much oil, he thought, as the darkness reached up and grabbed him.

When the model is charged in close combat it may attempt to Flip. Roll a d6 and attempt to score over the attacker's SAG. If successful, place the model behind the attacker and immediately make a strike attack. Flip cannot be used if the model is already engaged in close combat.

Flurry:
Opponent after opponent fell before him.

If a Fist destroys a model in close combat, he may immediately attack another adjacent enemy model within 1"

Gnaw:
There was no escape once its cavernous mouth was attached to its victim.

Model receives 2 additional d6 for every natural 6 rolled in the damage phase, instead of the usual 1d6.

Handy:
"There you go - good as new!"

Model may un-jam and give reloads to other models by moving within a 1/2" of them. Once a model does this, its turn is over.

Honor in Death:
"I shall not fall, and I will not fail!"

A model with this ability may ignore modifiers in the fatal damage section of the damage gauge if a successful NRV test is made. Modifiers are applied before the test and are then removed if successful.

Horrific:

Honestly, I wanted to help, but my legs were rooted to the spot: I couldn't tear my eyes from that terrible mockery of a face.

Models must pass a NRV test to charge models with this attribute. If a model takes damage in close combat with a model with this attribute, they must pass a Morale test at target number 11 or flee.

Infiltrate:

"I suppose you think you're just going to waltz right in; we'll never even make it to the facility."

"Look, I told you not to worry, we've got friends on the inside."

Model may be placed anywhere on the board after all other models have been set up, but cannot be placed within 12" of an enemy model.

Keen Eye:

Taking his time, he sighted down the barrel of his weapon; he was rewarded for his patience by the brief blossom of red on the Enforcer's chest.

+1 to RCA if model has not moved. Cannot be used in combination with Snap Shot.

Killing Blow:

His hand lashed out, placing a carefully executed blow on his opponent and the fight was over. 'Fight' is probably the wrong word as it implies the other man did something!

Must declare if they are going to use Killing Blow before combat begins. Incurs a -2 penalty to the model's CCA attribute, but if you beat your opponent, your damage score is doubled as in a critical success.

Leadership:

Some people have it and some don't, but when Marco spoke, people listened.

Crew models within 6" may use a Leader's NRV attribute for all morale-based tests. If a model with Leadership is a member of a team, all models within that team may make a morale-based test using its NRV attribute as long as they are in coherency.

Legendary:

I've seen men go down from far less, but he just kept on fighting!

If this model fails a fatal damage roll or fills its Damage Gauge and would normally be counted as dead, on the roll of 4, 5 or 6 on 1d6 it remains in play. Damage modifiers still apply as normal.

Luck:

I don't know how he does it, but no matter how much trouble he is in, he always ends up walking away.

May force an opponent to re-roll all or part of a roll that will directly affect the model once per round.

Marksman:

The sight moved over the armored form, until it came to rest on a small piece of runner visible between the ceramic plates on her target's neck.

If model with this skill has not moved and successfully hits its target in ranged combat, it may choose to add ONE of the following modifiers: 1 additional point of penetration or an extra 1d6 to the damage roll.

Martial Artist:

Years of training and physical discipline had turned his body into a living weapon.

On a successful Close Combat Attack model does 5d6 damage to opponent

Medic:

Stop complaining and keep the pressure on, or you'll bleed to death before I can do anything!

Model may heal up to d3 blocks on an injured model's Damage Gauge by moving within _" of them during their action phase. Players with a Medic on their team may leave dead models on the play area; if a Medic can reach them within 1 round, he can attempt to heal them. To heal a dead model, the Medic must first roll a 5 or 6; if he succeeds he may then roll a d3 as normal.

Misgiving:

"I can't do it, Sarge. She's just a kid."

"Fire, damn it, Simpson, she's already killed half the team!"

All human models attempting a ranged attack at a model with this ability must first pass an NRV check or they cannot fire.

Parry:

Their blades locked and they stared at each other, neither one having the upper hand.

Model may add +2 to their CCA score in close combat, but if their score is greater than their opponent, they do no damage and the combat is considered a draw.

Ponderous:

Slowly, but surely they advanced on our position.

Cannot make a Run move.

Presence:

There was something about him; those in his presence followed his order unquestioningly and showed no fear, no matter how great the danger.

Models within 6” of a friendly model with Presence are immune to morale-based NRV tests, including suppression tests.

Pummel:

Blow after blow rained down upon them.

On a successful Close Combat attack, model does 5d6 damage to opponent.

Random Movement:

There was no way to predict in which direction it would move.

Model moves randomly during the control phase 1d6”.

Regenerate:

I stared unbelievingly as its wounds knitted together before my very eyes!

All models with Regenerate may heal up to one wound per round on a d6 roll of 4, 5 or 6, even if they are dead. If the model has been killed, leave it on the table and roll during the control phase to see if it regenerates and is able to rejoin the game, if it does not regenerate a point of damage, the model is removed from play as normal. The regenerate roll is made during the control phase. Models with the Regenerate ability cannot use it if they have taken at least 1 point of damage from an energy weapon, just being hit by an energy weapon is not good enough!

Run ‘n’ Gun:

The Ronin dashed from pillar to pillar, gunfire churning dust from where he was seconds before; but, each time his guns spoke, one less answered back.

May run and fire small arms’ weapons with a -1 penalty to their RCA score in addition to any others incurred.

Sacrifice:

The next few seconds seemed to happen in slow motion. He knew he'd missed the target, and was already loweing his gun; he didn't know where she came from as she threw herself across the bullet's path, the scarlet explosion hanging longer in the air than she did.

A model with this ability will throw itself in harm's way, pushing or pulling another model to safety and taking the damage itself. The model has to be withing 2" of the sacrificing model and it must be declared before damage is rolled. The Sacrifice model will take double damage as in a critical.

Scout:

We’ll send them ahead; they’ll be so busy dealing with them, we’ll be under their noses before they realize it.

Model may be placed after all other models are deployed, up to 10” in advance of your crew’s set-up zone.

Second Glance:

He looked at the couple for longer than usual, and then gave them a friendly nod as he read their ID badges. Must be new to the station, he thought.

Models with this ability attempt to pass themselves off as enemy models. They may not be attacked unless an alarm has been sounded (if applicable) or they have attempted a hostile action (such as attacking an enemy or attempting to hack a system). Once a model has ‘discarded’ its disguise, all models with Second Glance on that crew are now viable targets.

Self Destruct:

Finally it fell to the ground. He allowed himself a brief respite to wipe the sweat from his brow and look over his fallen adversary; his ears were still ringing from the combat. No, it was coming from within his opponent. As realization dawned, he threw himself to the side, though not quickly enough to avoid the wall of fire and shrapnel that roared over him.

Once a model with Self-Destruct has died, it will explode with a 3" burst radius and cause 4d6 damage to any models in the burst.

Shrug-it-Off:

I’m sure I hit him, but there was no evidence of any damage and now he looked really mad.

If a model only receives 1 point of damage, it is ignored and not marked on the Damage Gauge. Any additional effects such as Poison or Fire still take effect.

Smoke:

"I tell you I saw it. Like a ghost, it just drifted across the corridor and straight through the wall!"

The model with the Smoke ability cannot be targeted directly with ranged attacks unless it is within a 4” range of attacking models. Weapons that use a blast template always count as missing. The model also ignores all terrain effects and may even pass through blocking terrain unhindered, though it cannot end its turn in terrain.

Snap Shot:

There was the sound of two shots in rapid succession, followed by two soft thuds as the guards fell lifeless into the dirt.

Model may fire twice in a turn with weapons that are classified as pistols. Each shot suffers a -1 modifier to their RCA score in addition to any others that are incurred.

Sneak:

I could swear he was standing right next to me a minute ago.

A model with this ability is always considered hidden at the end of its turn.

Sturdy:

"Not a problem. Move of the way skinny."

Model is never considered encumbered.

Sufferance:

It was if they didn’t feel or care about the damage being inflicted on their bodies.

Does not need to make morale checks due to taking damage.

Swarm:

"They’re all over us. Repeat, our position is compromised, get yourselves out, its too late for u…"

If there is a model within its charge range, it will attempt to charge it regardless of line of sight or facing. All other models with Swarm within 4” of the charging model will move their normal MVE after it.

Swift:

She moved so fast, my eyes couldn’t keep track of her.

Model may charge up to double its MVE.

Twitch:

It was as if someone had rewired his nervous system and then clipped a bettery to his nether regions. Thankfully he was only aware of it for a few seconds before he grafefully accepted unconsciousness.

This ranged telepathic attack requires line of sight. If the target fails to beat the attacker in an opposed NRV test, they are stunned.

Ward:

The shells flattened against his bare chest without even breaking the skin. Afterwards there wasn’t even a bruise. He looked at me conspiratorially and said with a wink “That’s why I don’t wear shirts - they only get messed up!”

The model is able to harden its skin to almost the toughness of steel. Roll a d3 to discover this model’s armor value each time it is hit.

Weapons Platform:

With every step it took, its mighty arms fired a barrage of lethal shells; no one could stand before its might.

May move and fire all weapons during a turn with no penalty.

Will of Iron:

Nothing concerns me - except losing!

Model does not have to make morale-based NRV tests.

Peter Johnston

WHAT'S IN THE BOX?

"So what's in the box, Father?"

"That is none of your concern, Alan."

The young Maven advanced, towering over the portly Vatacina official.

"I lost half my crew on this assignment, Father," He was almost spitting the words, "I think we deserve a few answers."

"You knew the risks, as did your fellows. It is you who have chosen this walk of life and you must abide by its rules. I am sorry for your losses, truly I am, but what you deserve is your payment, Alan, and nothing more."

As the Father turned to leave, the Maven grabbed his shoulder, spinning him back around.

"Well, I think if we don't deserve any answers, we at least deserve an increase in our delivery fee." Behind him his crew started to mutter in agreement.

"A contract is a contract. You should understand that as well as we do. It would be unwise…"

"It would be unwise to refuse me. How many others want what's in that crate of yours, hey? How much do you think it would be worth on the open market? More baubles and trinkets for you to hide in the bowels of Sibylline City?"

"This box contains no mere trinkets. My order has been searching for what lies within it since the time of Solomon. I doubt you would understand that type of commitment and dedication, Alan. Now walk away, while you still can."

"Don't threaten me, old man. If you won't give us what we want, we'll take it."

As he reached under his poncho to draw his revolver, he caught a stirring in the shadows. He made to shout out a warning to the remainder of his crew, but although his mouth worked, no sound issued forth and by then it was too late.

"I do apologize for the loss of your crew, Mr. Richards"

"No need, Father. It is I who should be apologizing to you. Dreadfully unprofessional behavior, the fact is you did me a favor. That sort of conduct could cost me my reputation and again, I'm awfully sorry. Unfortunately these incidents do sometimes happen with less experienced crews. I hope this does not tarnish what has been a most mutually beneficial relationship and, of course, I wouldn't dream of charging you for this recent assignment."

"You are too kind. However, we have received the goods and a contract is a contract. You should receive your payment confirmation shortly. I also blame myself for this, maybe I'm getting too old for this work."

"Youth may have strength and vigor, Father, but it doesn't have your wisdom and experience."

"Again, you are too kind. Until next time, Mr. Richards."

'Until next time, Father."

Father O'Brian cut the connection and looked intently at the small wooden box on the counter.

"How much blood has been spilt down the ages for you? How many lives have you unwittingly claimed?"

"Pardon, Father?"

"Just musing, Sister, just musing; a sign of age I fear." Placing the box in her hands, he held her gaze, "I am putting you personally in charge of the transfer to Sibylline, Sister, let nothing stand in your way."

"Of course, Father."

As she carried her charge away, a wan smile played across his face.

"Oh, and tell the Cardinal, now that we have the key, it can only be a matter of time before we find it."

CRAFT YOUR CREW

PAINTING GUIDE

Now that you have collected your crew, it is time to personalize them by adding a splash of color. Painting miniature figures is a much-discussed topic and many ‘experts’ will try and tell you exactly how to paint your figures. I feel that figure painting is far more personal than that and there is no right or wrong way – it’s whatever works for you. So, rather than give you exact instructions on how to paint specific miniatures, this is going to be a more general guide based upon my own 20 plus years of experience with details of various painting techniques I find useful; these are not hard and fast rules, just hopefully some good ideas.

The first thing to consider is the type of paint. Throughout this guide, I will be referring to water-based modeler’s acrylic paint and, while these seem to be the industry standard, they are far from the only choice available. Many people do use oils and enamels, but as I have used acrylics throughout my painting career, I have little expertise with other mediums. This really is all about personal choice: use what you feel comfortable with and what gives you the most satisfying results. I tend to use a wide variety of paints from several different manufacturers, so I am not going to identify specific named colours; instead I will use generic names so that you can apply them to your own choice of manufacturer. One other thing to remember is that many craft stores carry inexpensive acrylics in a wide range of colours that are often an inexpensive alternative to miniature paints - one paint that I use comes in 60ml bottles for the same price as miniature paint makers charge you for 12ml.

Next you have to decide on a colour scheme for your crew; as within the Rezolution universe pretty much anything goes, let your imagination run wild. One way to give some form of unity to your models is to limit your choice of colours and theme each team in your crew around certain uniform boundaries. This obviously works very well for CSO Trooper squads as they are part of a military organisation, but it can work just as well with Enforcers or Vassals by just using civilian clothing of similar styles and colors. Ronin tend to be more individual, but there is no reason why a particular Ronin crew could not have some form of uniform with gang colors or motifs.

Finally, it is time to pick up the figures and prepare them for painting. Initially, ensure that your figures are clean of any mold lines or extra flash from the molding process. Due to the high-quality molding processes used by foundries today, there is normally very little flash to remove and a gentle filing of any mold lines is usually sufficient. In theory, the mold line should go all the way around the figure and be easy to follow and remove. Once the figure is clean, it is best to then stick them onto the plastic base so that there is something to hold onto it while painting and can be put down easily without damaging your work. At this point, it is also a good idea to fix in place any separate parts of the figure like arms and weapons. This should be carefully done with a strong fast-acting glue, but make sure the piece looks natural in its pose by testing out positions before finally applying the glue.

Once the glue has dried, the figures are ready for an undercoat as it is vital to give your colors a good surface to adhere to. There are several choices to be made about undercoat – brush or spray and then black or white, but as before, use whichever method suits you best. Spraying is very quick and handy for painting batches of figures, but using a brush is more thorough, but laborious. I, personally, give my figures a quick spray and then touch them up with the same color on a brush. As to the color of the undercoat, this depends on the color of the finished product. White works well for bright and vivid colors, particularly red and yellow, but can be quite unforgiving, as any gaps tend to show. Black is far more forgiving if you miss anything, as it tends to blend into the creases and it also makes painting faster; it is, however, hard to find colors to give good coverage over black (such as red and yellow). I use a black undercoat and block out brightly colored sections in white to ensure good coverage.

When it comes to the actual colors, I tend to use a set of three tones for each one - a dark shade, the color itself and then a lighter, highlighting shade. I find this gives sufficient depth and definition without spending days blending different colors. The more pronounced the differences in tone, the harsher the final color will look, but if you use too subtle a blend, then the effect will be lost completely and your figure will look flat.

The only way to work this out is practice, but here are a few tips:

- Do not highlight red by adding white, as it just looks pink.

- Black can be highlighted with several dark colors depending on the desired effect; dark grey gives a dusty finish; dark blue gives a leathery finish; dark green gives an oily finish etc.

- White, in the same way, can be shaded with many different colors.

- The paler the color, the more subtle the shading should be.

- A sharp contrast in pale colors can give a fluorescent effect.

- If you tend towards darker shades where one color meets another, it gives a good contrast between them.

I usually paint the area in a dark shade; once it is dry, apply the mid-coat avoiding the lower sections, creases and edges; then apply a paler coat to the very tops of the creases etc. Basically, as the color gets lighter, less of it should be applied to the figure.

At this point a quick word about palettes - while mixing your colors it is a good idea to use a palette and this should be a non-absorbent surface. I find old CDs absolutely perfect (and often free!) and I use them until they are completely covered and then put them in the bits box for scenery bases.

The first part of the figure that I usually paint is the flesh, particularly the face, as this is the focal point of the miniature and should have the most time spent on it to ensure excellent results. The flesh should be painted using the same three color method, making the creases around the eyes and nose a darker shade, and then working out to paler shades on the cheekbones and tips of the ears. If you want your figure to look gaunt and haggard, give it very dark eye sockets and dark, hollow-looking cheeks. It is at this point that you can add make-up, warpaint and tattoos that can be as elaborate and imaginative as you wish.

Having completed all the flesh tones, I start painting the largest areas of color and, as I finish each section, I move onto the next smaller section, so that the final pieces to be painted are the fine details like belts, buckles and jewellery. Each section is painted with the three-color technique that gives the figure a certain tonal uniformity. When painting the finer details, it is best to make them contrast with their surroundings as they can sometimes get a rather lost. Having finished the actual painting, give the figure a good spray coat of varnish to protect the paint and when it is dry you can start work on the base. The painting and texturing of the base really finishes the model and can be used to give the figures in your crew another element of uniformity. By far the easiest way to finish a base is to give it a single clean coat of paint in a neutral color; it is also relatively simple to apply a coat of PVA glue and sand to the base so that, once it is dry, it can be painted in three tones of color with each lighter shade dry-brushed more gently than the last. If you are feeling particularly adventurous, you could remodel the bases to look like pavements or high-tech floors - some of these in this book were made this way.

The concrete bases are first skinned with a thin layer of epoxy putty that you can smooth out using a flat piece of plastic. Keep the plastic and all the other tools damp to prevent them from sticking to the putty, and use a hobby knife to press in the crease between the concrete ‘plates’. Next, use the side of a rectangular needle file to press in the pattern on each side of the crease. Finally, use a very fine razor saw drawn across the putty sideways, to score lots of very shallow parallel lines in the surface, attempting to mimic the surface of brushed concrete. To create manhole covers use a plastic circle glued into place before the epoxy putty is layered on and use the tip of a hobby knife to create the gap around the coverplate. For the concrete, use a medium gray paint stained with very thin washes of olive green, black, and umber and then dry-brush it carefully with two shades of gray and a final, very light, dry-brushing of pure white.

This should give you some basic ideas about painting your miniatures, but do remember to have fun as the painting and creative side of miniature gaming is just as important to many players as the actual playing of the game itself.

COLOR SCHEMES FOR FACTIONS

The beauty of this hobby is that you can do anything you want to with your miniatures. Players in Rezolution are not restricted to a set of historical precedents or game-enforced color schemes. The following are a source of ideas and inspiration, not a set of rules. If you decide that your CSO Troopers should all wear pink, then paint them pink, there is no right or wrong in this (actually we do advise you not to paint them pink – that is just wrong!). The main thing is to enjoy what you are doing, express yourself and feel some sort of connection with the troops that you command.

APAC

The forces of Asia Pacific should have a certain corporate uniformity, but without the military aspects of the CSO. This can be achieved by the use of a restricted palette that relies on tonal variation for definition; for example, your whole crew could be painted in varying shades of red, from deep burgundy through to vivid scarlet. If this almost monotone effect is complemented by contrasting details and patterning, it gives a subtly uniform finish that ties the whole crew together.

Oriental culture is full of strong images and symbols that can be used as decoration on the larger flat areas of the Enforcer's clothing, and if all the members of a team have one particular symbol on them, it will also help to add another level of uniformity to the crew. APAC operatives are keen on warpaint, tattoos and other forms of body adornment and these touches will not only give them the correct feel, but they can, again, be used to tie the crew together; for example, if you decide to have all your Enforcers in warpaint, try using differing designs, but with the same colors to identify the unit as a team.

However, there is no reason you cannot throw caution to the wind and go wild - imagine a crew of Enforcers that have clothing printed to look like the armor of the samurai or even a gang of Polynesian Enforcers wearing garish Hawaiian shirts and surfing shorts!

DRAVANI

The Dravani carry themselves with a certain arrogance as they pass among us undiscovered. This can be represented by the use of rich, deep colors and lavish embroidery; dark purple suits and blood red dresses for the clothes of those that pass themselves as human. Some of the Vassals, particularly the Executors, mimic their Dravani masters' style of dress and think themselves far more important than they truly are. Some of the Vassals and the Dravani mutations have had surgery to alter their physical appearance and their bodies are often covered in scars and bruises with sunken features and red-rimmed eyes. The Dravani that have shed the mask of civility and shun structured society, often have little interest in maintaining any pretence, so they wear heavy protective garments and robes that accentuate their alien nature; for example, the heavy black leather robes and aprons worn by the Baggers and their associates.

RONIN

The Ronin gives you the chance to go really wild as anything goes for these teams of highly-trained mavericks. Ronin are so confident in their own abilities, that they shun the use of camouflage and subtle clothing and enjoy showing their contempt of their opponents by wearing vivid clothing that sets them aside from the norm. Tossing aside all rules of dress, Ronin often see their flamboyant clothing as a true expression of their extrovert personalities. It is at this point that you really need to think outside the box and come up with some wild and crazy patterns and color combinations; anything that sets your Ronin up as a crew that disregards the rules of polite society and as not perturbed by lawbreaking or personal violence. There really is no right and wrong with Ronin; your Maven could be such a strong character that he has forced certain uniformity on his crew, such as the patches worn by biker gangs or similar types of clothing. Perhaps your crew is slightly more subtle and likes to blend in, or perhaps they have a strong group image and paint their faces like clowns. However you decide to paint your Ronin, there is the exception of the Ghost: these individuals care nothing for their appearance and rarely spend time thinking about their image, for when they ride the electronic tsunami they can appear however they wish and so their physical forms are often unkempt and dirty. They really should look like unhealthy addicts that have just come down from a very long trip!

CSO

The militarized arm of Unipol is exactly that – military - so when seeking inspiration for your CSO crew, look at the military. Good use of camouflage and uniform coloration can give your miniatures a suitably authentic feel and try to keep any packs and webbing within the similar range of colors as their uniforms; the camouflaging effect of sandy colored clothes in the desert is somewhat destroyed if it is accompanied by harsh black belts and pouches.

If you are looking for inspiration for military camouflage, try the German and Russian forces of WW2 or even the various African nations throughout the last four decades. You could also look at early forms of camouflage on tanks and ships of the First World War, but don't restrict yourself to purely military sources; have a look at the camouflages of the natural world as this is where military designers often get their inspiration - for example, take the skin designs of geckos and change the colors to suit your own battlefield.

Do not feel totally restricted to camouflage, it can also be very effective to use a restricted palette to give a military effect. For example, the CSO Troopers set to act as security could be painted in shades of blue and black to suit the slightly more civilian surroundings and give them an air of civilian law enforcement.

THE SITE

"The complex should be in visual range, sir". The radio message cut through the static in Professor Flint's earpiece bringing him sharply back to reality.

"I'll be right there" he responded quickly, yet still looking at the barren Martian landscape outside – they could have driven right over it in these conditions and still not have seen it.

The small, one-man, observation dome towards the rear of the Mars Cruiser gave the Professor a great view of the surrounding area. Even with an atmosphere, Mars was a desolate and lonely place. He could never pin down what made this place so beautiful. To the south he could see the main body of the sandstorm swirling across the cratered surface, while all around him red dust was raging as fierce electrical storms crashed overhead. Behind him, out of view, was the Valles Marineris, a vast series of canyons that the colonists had named the Scar. This unexpected trip to the Tharsis Ridge and the mining research station, MR2, was certainly no hardship, though he could have wished for better conditions.

He had been studying some output from his new mineral analysis routine when the emergency call had come in. Arriving at Commonwealth Central Command, he learned that a violent storm had passed through the area surrounding MR2 and contact had been lost. Contact could not be re-established and so now he was part of a quick response team sent to find out what was happening at the site.

Professor Flint flipped open his PDR and listened again to the last message received from MR2.

"Central Command, this is MR2. You will not believe what we have found…" Static interrupted the message. "…incredible…" More static. "… be seen to be believed. Unfortunately a large storm …" More static "…the north. Communications already disrupted. We are locking down the facility un…" Static "…passes. MR2 out."

That was over seventy-two hours ago and since then nothing.

Central Command now wanted answers especially as to what might have been found. Since the message had come in, the walkways had been buzzing, mostly with rumors of a rich mineral deposit that would secure the Commonwealth as the major player in the mineral mining and export business on Mars.

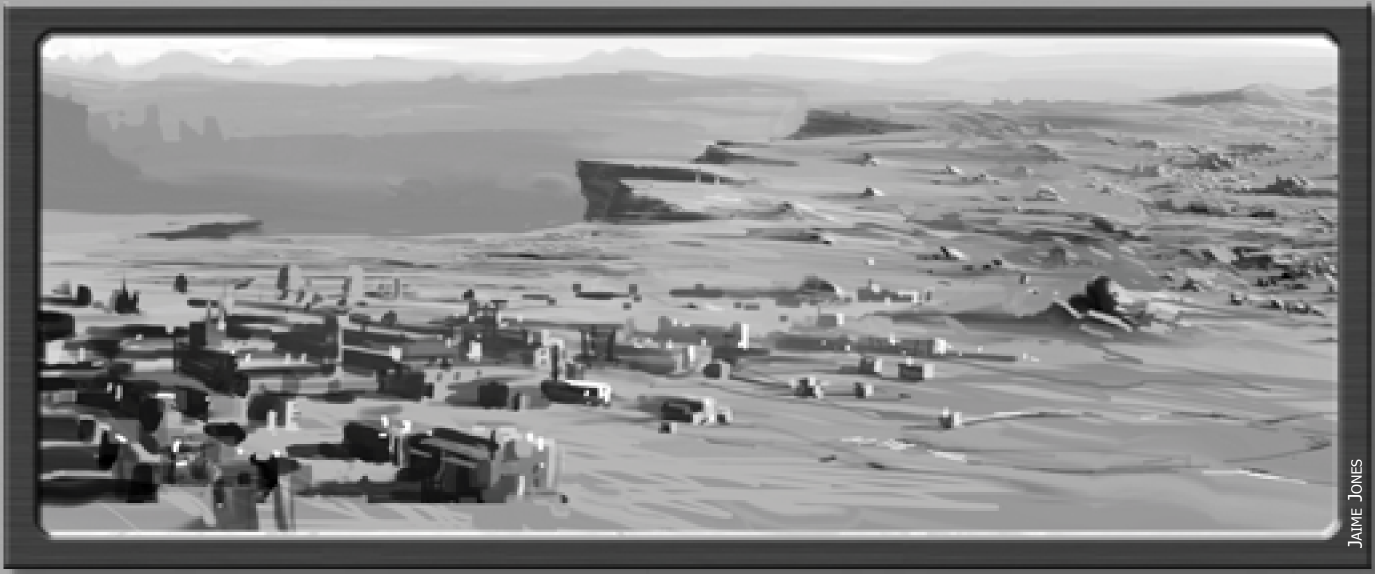
Professor Flint dropped down out of the observation dome and moved to the front of the Cruiser where the communications officer was still trying to make contact with the research station.

"No luck?" inquired the Professor.

"Still nothing, sir. We're still receiving a lot of interference from the storm, but they should have been receiving us for at least the last four hours."

"Over there," the driver pointed ahead to a tall metal communications tower that was just coming into view, dwarfed by the towering rocks behind. "That's the array. Looks ok from here, no visible storm damage that I can see."

"What's that?" For a brief moment Flint was sure he



had seen a flash of light in the distance.

“Can’t see anything, sir. Nothing there but rock.”

The driver flicked a switch on the console in front of him. “Patrol on standby, evac in two minutes.”

This was to the security patrol that had accompanied them; the Commonwealth was taking no chances with this one.

The Cruiser crawled over the last of the ridge where the vast communications array stood. Flint scanned the area, but could find no life-forms in the immediate vicinity, although the equipment was picking up a lot of echoes. Flint tried to adjust the equipment, but all he got was more phantoms.

Heading towards the rear bay, he grabbed his equipment and the breather he never went on-surface without.

The security patrol consisted of a Captain and six troopers. They were already lined up at the rear entrance when Professor Flint entered the bay.

The rear door of the Cruiser opened. The first two unit members slipped out of the door, rifles at the ready, and deployed to either side, as the others followed closely.

The main complex door was about 50 feet away from the Cruiser and the unit dashed across the red sand, eyes scanning the area for any sign of danger. Flint followed. The sand howled around them, smothering them with layers of red dust.

“Jones, Barker. Check out the array and radio room. Keep in touch”

Two troopers veered off and ran towards a small building huddled below the communications tower, from which came the only other sound that could be heard above the storm and their own heavy breathing: the slamming of an unfastened hatch.

“OK, lets go in. Gregson, get that door open.”

The trooper put down his gun and knelt in front of the keypad and within seconds the door locks clicked and the heavy metal door swung open.

Inside the corridor there was little illumination and endless shadows.

The patrol moved inside, everyone alert as they peered into the darkness.

Everything was suddenly still as the radio screeched into life.

“Sir, the array seems to be ok, but the radio connectors have been destroyed. Looks deliberate, sir. I think we’re looking at sabotage here.”

“Ok, Barker, you and Jones stay there and stay alert. We don’t want any surprises.”

“Will do. Out”

“Ok, looks like we do have a hostile situation here. Weapons hot, gentlemen. Move out, and stay alert.”

The patrol moved down the corridor, Flint staying close to Captain Wiggins. There was no sign of any of the research team as they continued to the end of the corridor. To the left were a number of closed doors, to the right a large open doorway. If Professor Flint remembered correctly, turning right would lead to the loading bay and the equipment store.

Suddenly the sound of gunfire could be heard behind them and over the com links.

“Jones, Barker. Report.” yelled Wiggins.

Silence.

A burst of static.

“Sorry, sir. False alarm. Jones thought he saw something moving, but it was nothing.”

“Keep a lid on it and the next time I hear gunfire there had better be a real target and Jones, controlled bursts, do I make myself clear?”

“Yes, sir, sorry, sir.”

Professor Flint heard his name being called from one of the rooms.

“We found this, sir.” Flint took the PDR from Corporal Dixon. It looked like an older model, a PT100, but it might still work. The screen came to life, casting an eerie green glow across Flint’s face.

He flicked it to journal and pressed play.

“December 20th. Another quiet day. The same as every other day. The drill crew seems to be making slow progress through the rock wall. It’s incredibly tough, but Jenkins is convinced there is something behind it, although he’s not sure what. Personally I think he’s been out here too long. Garret has been acting strange, keeps vanishing. God knows where he goes to out here, there’s nothing but rock and sand for hundreds of miles. He seems very interested in the lights to the north. Not any of ours - looks like someone else is out here besides the Commonwealth.”

“December 24th. Jenkins is really excited. The drill has broken through the rock wall and he keeps going on about something behind there. I need to go and check it out.”

“December 25th. Looks like a storm is brewing, we will have to lock down the site for the next day at least. Just our luck when we find something worth investigating. We did more drilling at the rock wall Jenkins broke through yesterday. There are carvings in the rock, I’ve never seen anything like it and there seems to be a cavern behind it, but it looks too unstable to risk going in. We will have to wait for the storm to pass.”

December 26th. Garret’s finally flipped, he’s gone mad. I know it’s been a bit weird around here lately, but I didn’t think Garret would be the one to crack. Yesterday we found him smashing up the radio connectors. The stupid bastard, now we can’t contact anyone. We’ve locked him in his room, but he keeps ranting about someone coming. I don’t know how, as the storm still shows no sign of letting up.”

That was the last entry, time stamped about 36 hours earlier. Professor Flint switched off the PDR and placed it inside his jacket.

“Captain, we have to take a look at the drill site. They obviously found something out here and we need to find out what.”

“Ok, Professor, through the loading bay, that should lead us straight to the drilling area.”

The patrol moved out of the room, more alert than ever as the tension shifted up a notch. They had all heard the journal, and its contents added to their unease. They had all heard too about the red sickness, the last case only a month or so ago, where a research assistant had cracked and gone on a murder spree. Maybe Garret had done the same and there were mutilated bodies in the shadows waiting to be discovered.

They moved down the corridor and into the equipment bay, all sounds now kept to a minimum. The place was clear, except for one of the lightweight Cruisers that was in the center of the room; underneath, Flint could see a mess of wires hanging down from the vehicle’s engine hatch. No one would be going anywhere in that in a hurry.

The patrol fanned out and moved towards the outer door; about 250 feet beyond it lay the drilling site.

“Jones. Barker. What’s your status?” Captain Wiggins’ harsh whisper hissed over the com link. Silence. He repeated his request, but still nothing. Jones and Barker were not answering.

“Ok. Keep together, keep an eye on the man in front of you at all times. I don’t know what’s going on here, but I don’t like it.”

The patrol moved out of the door with the Professor at the center of the now battle-ready group.

The drill site was inside one of the larger mountains that shadowed the area. In the rock face was a cave, where a faint light could be seen through the swirling dust.

Professor Flint watched as the Captain sent the patrol into the cave mouth one by one, each patrol member scanning the area for any sign of life or movement. Flint looked behind him trying to see the main complex through the haze. Something was not quite right. They had missed something. Realizing that he was now standing alone in front of the dark cave, Flint hurriedly stepped inside.

The cave was illuminated by a series of small electric lights strung in a chain across the ceiling. The light was enough to see, but only just. Indents in the sand around the cave mouth showed many footprints as well as tracks from the mining vehicles used at the site. There was a passage leading off to one side and the troopers had already started to disappear into its shadows. The passage was not straight, but seemed to twist and turn, there was no way that this tunnel had been dug by a machine. With each twist Flint’s uneasiness grew and he felt the sweat begin to soak into his collar.

The tunnel widened and on the wall ahead he saw what must be the carvings mentioned in the PDR journal. Flint had no idea what they were, but they were beautiful, such amazing detail in such delicate carvings. He would have liked to examine them more, but Captain Wiggins motioned him over to the next bend in the tunnel. Around this corner was a one-man runabout and Wiggins pointed out to Flint the marks on the front wing.

“That’s blood, no older than a day or so.” The Captain’s voice was low as he turned to go further down the tunnel. There was another vehicle parked nearby. This one had a length of rope tied to the front, the rope stretching out and disappearing down into the tunnel. After about 15 feet Flint saw that it snaked down a hole in the rocky floor where the Captain and his men had now taken up position. Flint knelt down and peered inside.

Total darkness was all he could see as the rope disappeared into the depths.

The Captain came and knelt beside him.

“Any ideas as to what this is for?” he asked.

"I have absolutely no idea, but I'm sure we need to find out."

Flint hauled the rope out of the hole while the Captain shone his flashlight into the blackness.

"It's a long way down, that lights not touching it," Flint peered into the hole. Looking up he stared levelly at the Captain. "We need to send someone down."

"Dixon, get over here, tie that rope on you, we're lowering you down."

After tying the rope round his waist, Dixon sat on the edge of the hole, feet dangling over the edge.

"Bryant, Morgan, take the strain, lets lower him down." The two men came and took the weight as Dixon slid into the inky blackness.

"Gently does it. Not too quickly. What can you see?" The rope was lowered inch by inch, as Dixon disappeared into the darkness.

"Hold on, let me get my flashlight." Dixon's voice could be heard over the com link.

"Oh my god. What is this place?"

Behind them, in the tunnel, a shadow moved.

"This is fantastic, I have never seen anything like it, must go on for miles. Wow, you have got to see this."

The Professor struggled to see further down the hole, but Dixon's flashlight was a long way down.

"Hold on. What was that? I thought I saw something moving over there." Dixon's voice was faint, and a burst of static crackled over the com.

Behind Flint, Trooper Gregson swung round sharply.

"There's definitely something down here. It's over there - in the shadows!"

"My God! Get me up, get me up. Now!"

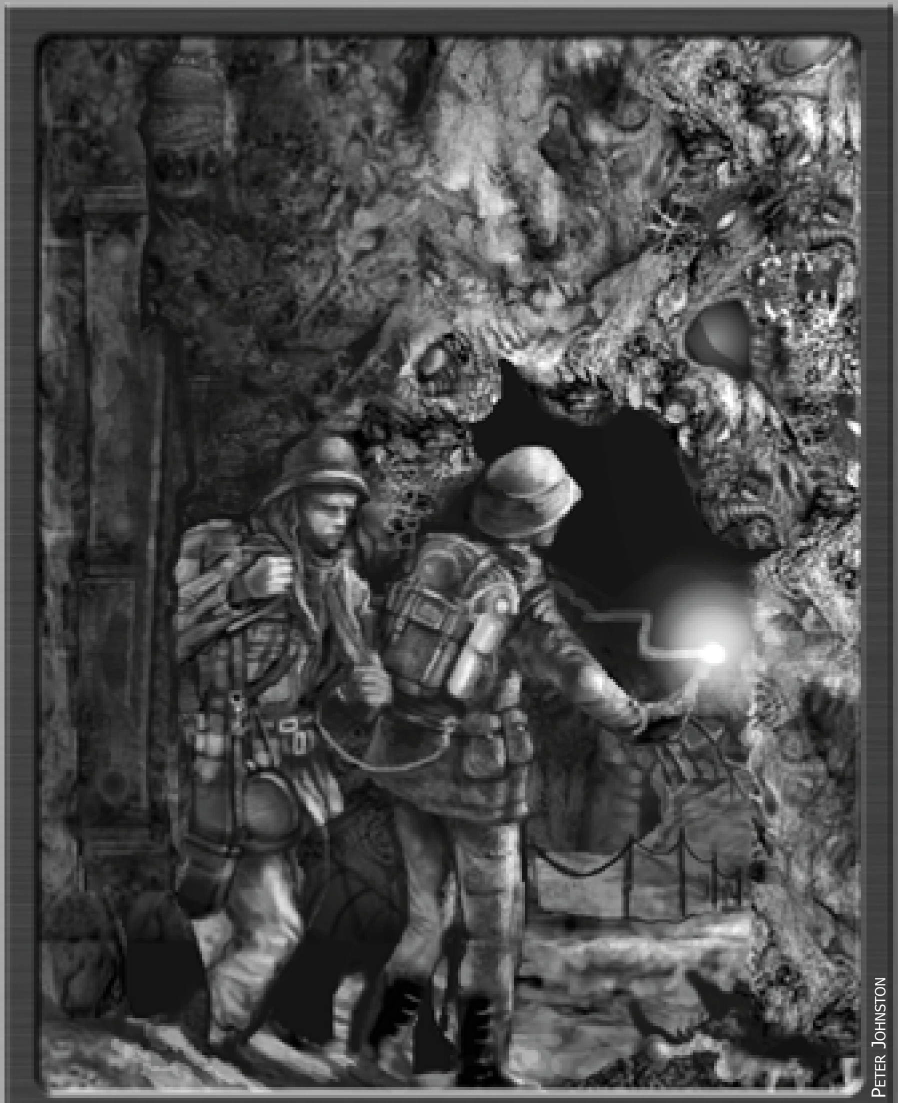
Suddenly a burst of gunfire illuminated the tunnel as, behind them, Trooper Gregson discharged his weapon.

With Dixon's voice still echoing over the com, Professor Flint grabbed the rope, and tried to haul the trooper out of the hole.

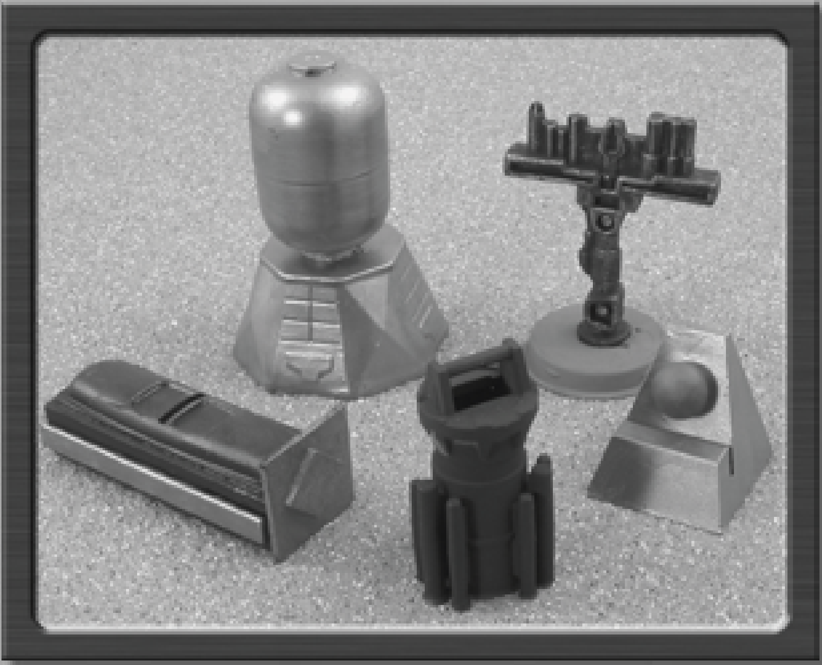
"Hold your fire! Hold your fire!" Captain Wiggins yelled at his men.

As Flint dragged frantically at the rope, he fell backwards as the tension suddenly slackened and the rope pulled free of the hole.

Corporal Dixon was no longer at the end of the rope.



TERRAFORMING



CREATING YOUR GAMING ENVIRONMENT

So you have your figures, you know the rules, all you need now is some 22nd century terrain scaled to fit on your kitchen table…

The nature of the terrain across which any given conflict is fought, not only drastically affects the nature of the battle, but also impacts what forces are to be deployed and what weapons and tactics should be used. The battles of Stalingrad and Kursk are good examples of how, within a matter of months, two very different styles of warfare were used by the exact same armies. If a battle is fought over open terrain, such at Kursk, then large formations with long-range weaponry are the most effective choices for your force. When the battlefield is a crowded city with combat raging from building to building and room to room, small teams with short-range, high velocity firepower are far more effective.

Rezolution is a fast-paced game set mainly in the cities, factories and space stations of a technologically advanced future. As such, it has been designed around small teams of highly-trained operatives armed with a plethora of weapons that are most effective when used at short range with deadly intent. Therefore, it is vital that your playing surface should be crowded and busy. It is far better to play on a smaller board (we recommend for most games a 4’X4’ playing surface) with lots of obstacles and cover, than it is to spread that terrain over a larger area. However, Rezolution also provides some unique and more open environments for play such as Mars!

Remember that terrain works in three dimensions and the use of those different levels will help create a truly three-dimensional game that will enhance your tactical play.

Many people get as much enjoyment from building terrain as they do from playing the game and painting the figures. If you have a look through the pages of this rulebook you will find several examples of homemade terrain and, in fact, everything you see has been made specifically for Rezolution by the team at *Aberrant Games*.

It is relatively simple to make some suitably anarchic buildings, barricades and other urban features that can be spread about a table to represent the mean streets of the outer cities of Earth. Another easy example of terrain that can be made is the dunes and rocky outcrops of the Red Planet, and the mining facilities and frontier towns that can be found on its surface. This type of terrain can be budgeted to match any pocket and there is nothing like the feeling of pride and a job well done when you lay out a homemade Elysium facility for your game!

Corporate facility interior.

One of the most straightforward homemade piece of terrain is the inside of a large building or space station; this type of terrain can be very versatile and great fun to build.

First there are a number of tools and materials that you need to get hold of:

Craft knife: Without exception, you will find it difficult to make any terrain without a good, sharp, craft knife with a ready supply of blades. Materials like foam core blunts blades surprisingly quickly and there is nothing more dangerous than a blunt knife. Please be careful to cut away from yourself and to ensure that your knife is stored safely.

Strong scissors: These will be used to cut the card and the body repair mesh. No need to use the best dressmaking scissors, as any strong, cheap pair will do.

Steel ruler: These come in several sizes and I would suggest that it is easier if you have a couple of differing lengths, such as a 6” short ruler for fine work and then something longer for the larger cuts. These make it far easier to achieve strong, hard-edged cuts and give a better overall finish.

Dressmaking pins: Plastic headed pins that can be used to hold card and balsa sections together while the glue dries. Those with a large plastic head are a lot easier to remove and reuse.

Hot glue gun: This is a really useful piece of kit that makes life so much faster and easier. They come in a variety of sizes and it is probably worth going for the middle size one, as life gets troublesome with the big ones and tiresome with the tiny ones. It is best to practice with some bits of scrap, but bear in mind that the glue comes out extremely hot so you have to be very careful. Also, this glue sets quite quickly and very hard, so when you put it down make sure it is on something that will catch any dripping glue. You can use it for most things except expanded polystyrene, which melts with the heat.

Paint: This really all comes down to personal taste, but the most cost-effective is to use household emulsion paints. Go to any good hardware store and get them to mix you specific colors in reasonable quantities, as this way you can use a diverse set of colors. The beauty of emulsion is that it is water-soluble and can be shaded with other water-soluble paints such as children’s poster paints. It is also worth picking up some cheap, disposable plastic cups to use as mixing pots. Obviously for finer details, you can use the paints that you normally use for your miniatures.

Paintbrushes: For the bulk of the scenery painting, you will need a selection of cheap brushes, such as small household brushes and children’s flat brushes. It is not worth using expensive brushes, as they will get ruined too quickly. You may need some finer brushes when it comes to detailing and any reasonable modeler’s brushes will do.

White / PVA glue: This is an absolute necessity. Used for gluing all manner of materials, it also waterproofs as well as setting hard slowly enough to allow for repositioning. It can also be added to poster paint to give it more permanence, used as a waterproof/protective covering, or mixed with plaster to give a flexible texture.

Baseboards: These can be any stiff material. I personally find chipboard or MDF to be ideal. If you purchase this from a timber merchant or hardware store ask them to cut it to size. To begin with four pieces of 24” by 24” should be perfect. You can use other sizes, but I find this size gives good flexibility, combined with relative ease of storage.

Stiff card or foam core/card: This will be used for making walls and divisions within the terrain itself. Foam card is readily available from craft shops and office suppliers, but can be a little expensive. A great many supermarkets use foam core for their temporary signage and you might be able to pick some up there. Just remember that it will need to be well painted, as there is nothing more distracting than seeing your beautifully painted crew moving past a wall that says “buy 1 get one free.” If you cannot get foam card then any stiff card will do. If you have to, you could use cardboard box, just remember to tape the top so that the corrugations cannot be seen.

Car body repair mesh/vent covers: This is going to be the floors and corridors of your building. Car body repair mesh, which is available from most auto-stores, can be easily cut into shape and stuck to the floors to represent industrial flooring. It can also be glued to upright posts in order to make chain-link for fences. For the corridors and textured floors in the Dravani interior that we made, we used vent covers bought in a hardware store. They were then just glued to the baseboards and the rooms were built up around them.

Junk and a well-supplied bits box: Now this is the point at which you can just let your imagination and creativity go wild. Always keep an eye out for interesting stuff to use in terrain building. The most obvious source is old plastic model kits and leftover bits of miniatures. When we were building the scenery you see here, we pooled numerous old kits we had between us, although we also went out and bought some cheap model kits which supplied some excellent set dressing and shapes. However, kits are not the only useful source as plastic packaging can come up with some interesting shapes - just remember to wash it thoroughly before using it. An example of this is the cryo tanks in the Dravani building, which were made from the protective caps from the top of deodorant sticks. Also, have a look around discount stores as they often have cheap toys that can be cut up. Be aware that the oddest of things can become very different once painted - within the terrain in this book, there is a microwave egg poacher that has been turned into satellite dishes and storage tanks, as well as a random plumbing sump left over from recent home repair. The main thing with all of this is to have fun and use your imagination.

Planning

The first thing is to come up with a plan as to what you are actually going to build. Remember, if you are using 24" square baseboards, for maximum flexibility you need to make sure that all corridors and passageways leave the edge of each board in the same place, so that they can be fitted together appropriately; you also have to make sure that the corridors are the same width. The point at which the corridors leave the board edge is really up to you, but I would suggest that they leave either in the center of the board, or 6" in to the board from each edge. Have a look at the accompanying diagram for an example. If you decide on the 6" option you will find that the boards are even more flexible as they can be staggered. Each corridor should leave the board straddling the exit point. This means that if your corridors are 3" wide and leaving 6" from the board edge, then the center of the corridor should be at 6" with 1 1/2" of corridor either side of the 6" point. Not every 6" has to have a corridor; as long as the wall has a door on it, a corridor can end in a dead end at the edge of the board. Once the corridor has left the board edge, it can do whatever you want, as long as when it reaches another board edge it is in the same relative position. The boards themselves should be made up of a mixture of different sized rooms and hallways in order to give an interesting and varied game. Just think about what sort of rooms you would find in the heart of a corporate enclave in 2175. Some good ideas are offices, a boardroom, experiment chambers, laboratories, warehouses, power centers, mainframe computer rooms, and even broom closets or restrooms. There really is no limit to what is possible, from a room full of giant plants that supply oxygen for the space station, to a cafeteria where everyone stops for a coffee. Have a look through your piles of junk and just see what ideas you can come up with, and remember that not every corporation is totally moral or ethical so cells and rooms full of weird weapons can also be included.

Execution

Once you have a plan, you should first of all transfer it onto the baseboards with a marker pen and then start from the floor upwards. Cut the flooring that you want to use and apply it using the hot glue gun. Whilst that dries, cut the foam card to the right height for the walls of the corridor (about 2 1/2" to 3") and the required lengths of the corridors; then mark it with the room divisions you have decided on. At this point it is easiest to apply any doors that you planned. You should cut the doors from plastic or thin card, making sure you have similar sized doors for either side of the walls. Then glue them into place on the walls before you glue the walls to the baseboards. Once the doors are fitted, glue the corridor walls either side of the floors using PVA glue and holding it together with pins; it should then be put to one side to dry for at least 12 hours.

The next stage is to cut the room divisions from card as well as the outer walls of the rooms that border the edge of the boards. Once the corridors are dry, you can glue on the floors and walls of the rooms using the same technique you used to make the corridors. After another 12 hours drying comes the really fun part as it is now time to take your box of junk and start the set dressing. There is no right or wrong way of doing this, but look through the pages of the rulebook for inspiration, or take a look at movies or even computer games. Fill the warehouses with crates and the offices with consoles and cubicles. Use old bits of wiring and broken bits of electronics to fill the computer suites. It is at this point that you can use ready-made resin extras if you want to, but it is a lot more fun to create it all yourself. Use some common sense at this point and if something looks awkward, paint it before you stick it to the board and put it to one side until you have painted the main structure. As you create the interiors, some pieces will obviously need to be glued in place, while others could be kept separate in order to add more variety. Spend a few hours experimenting with your bits box and you will be surprised at what you come up with. A good example is the surgical experimentation table on our Dravani board - this started life as parts of a free toy from a fast-food outlet combined with some card and bits off a plastic model kit!

Having completed the construction, it is time to paint, and I would suggest an overall undercoat first. An undercoat spray is probably the most straightforward, and you can usually pick up undercoat spray from your local hobby store or even car undercoat from an auto-store, just make sure that it gives a matt finish and that you use it in a well ventilated place. Once the whole piece is undercoated, you can start to layer on the colors that you want to use. Start with a heavy dry brush of a dark shade and work up to a final light shade with a lighter touch. Again, do not get too restricted with colors and textures as not all corridors are dark gray, and remember that these are places where people work so the corporate boardrooms could have carpet and perhaps the canteen has a wooden laminate floor. Scientific clean-rooms look great if highlighted from a light blue-gray up to white, as this gives then a sense of being clinical as well as also acting to draw the eye to the most interesting parts of your table. If you want a moody feel, use dark colors like a deep midnight blue and dark green, and if you paint consoles and lights in contrasting pale colors, they will take on a certain glow. Once the paint has dried, draw or print some posters and signs on good quality paper and use them as final dressing for exit signs and room titles.

You should now have an excellent playing surface with which you can spend many months of gaming. It is also easy to get a new baseboard and create extra pieces to extend your game table.

Exterior Scenery

Another excellent setting for Rezolution skirmishes is the slums and shantytowns of the outer cities. This type of scenery is best made as a textured board with all the buildings etc. made as separate pieces, thus again allowing maximum flexibility and ease of storage.

As a baseboard, use some solid timber boards (chipboard, MDF, plywood) that are thick enough to be rigid, but remain light enough for ease of movement. Probably these boards work best at 24” by 48” as this size can be easily stored under a bed or behind a couch and, once placed together, make the ideal 4 feet square playing surface. The easier way to finish the boards is to paint them a mid-gray tone in household emulsion paint, then give them a generous dry brush with a paler gray.

The next part of the project is to plan out some buildings, shacks, barricades and other miscellaneous terrain you may want to build. For inspiration look at the pictures in this book and on our website; you can also get great ideas from many sci-fi films or TV shows. Another aspect of the outer cities is the reuse of older buildings; at the current time there are buildings throughout the world, many hundreds of years old, that have fallen into disrepair and become the residences of squatters, the low-waged and the unemployed. Think about the things that a high-tech world would dispose of and the people on the outskirts of society would make use of - containers, waste drums, out-of-date hardware, and abandoned vehicles - all of which could be turned into huts, shacks and shelters.

When creating these shacks etc. you should plan a variety of sizes and shapes; the smallest are best mounted onto old CDs (a really useful material that many internet providers give away free) and it is best to ensure that the largest structures have about a 12” square base on thin hardboard for rigidity. Apart from these restrictions, pretty much anything goes. Huts and houses made from stiff card with ruined sections and/or extra bits added on; shacks; tents; cardboard box houses; lean-tos made from tarpaulin and old junk; piles of disused electronics; junked vehicles; piles of old tires; and all the refuse of a corrupt society that cares little for the destruction that its careless disposal causes. Linear obstacles also make excellent additions, and walls, fences, barricades and roadblocks all provide interesting, tactical opportunities.

Your main aim throughout this project should be to create a complete sense of chaos and despair within which people attempt to scrape a living. This scenery also gives lots of opportunity for multi-level playing as combat can occur on the roofs of tenements, as well as in and out of the ruins. There is also the fierce and bloody scenario of house-to-house, urban conflict, where opponents struggle for control of streets and houses, often one room at a time.

A PRELUDE TO WAR

"Commercial vessel Delta Five One Zero One Alpha. Please stand down and prepare for boarding. Please acknowledge… still no response, sir."

Captain Dahling swiveled in his chair and looked once more at the monitor displaying the ugly grey shape of the transport - why, oh why on his watch…

"Sir, they're coming about and we're detecting electrical activity. Looks like they're opening bay doors."

"Weapons systems?"

"Still negative, they are attempting to block our scans and the weapons could also be shielded."

"MARG, what do you think?"

The warm tones of the Cormorant's AI filled the bridge. "It's an even chance, we've seen how scrappies modify and shield weapons in civilian vessels before. If they are deploying, we might not be able to respond if we wait too long."

Dahling turned to his Communications Officer, a thin line of sweat beginning to form on his upper lip. "Try again."

"Commercial vessel Delta Five One Zero One Alpha. Please stand down and prepare for boarding. Please acknowledge?"

Yet again, static was the only reply. "Sir?"

Dahling paused for an eternal second, biting hard into his top lip, all eyes upon him. Pulling himself erect in his chair, he reached for his restraint harness. "All hands to battle stations. Arm forward torpedo tubes, launch stations fire at will."

The freighter rocked as the iridescent energy beams found their mark. Six flickering flares of light left the Cormorant and sped towards the vessel. Two split off almost immediately and headed towards its rear, while the others moved into a wider formation as the sensors located their targets. Orange blossoms spread out along the freighter's hull as they impacted, burning fiercely in the venting oxygen. The bay doors disgorged their cargo as it lurched violently with each blow, thousands of crates and containers drifted sleepily into the atmosphere as the last two missiles found their target in the ship's engines, and a new star briefly illuminated the night sky over Mars.

"In breaking news – following the Martian declaration of independence and its acknowledged position as a protectorate of the Commonwealth, a Xenone commercial carrier was fired upon and destroyed by a Commonwealth frigate. Xenone have not been forthcoming with a crew or contents list, but have stated that at this time it is believed all hands were lost. Unipol and the Vatacina have called for a council of all nations and corporations before any escalation causes further loss of life. More on these tragic events as they unfold."

Dahling swilled the brandy in its glass and watched the last of the debris turn into shooting stars as dawn crept over the face of the planet. A brief rap on the door and it slid open - only Clemens, the ship's Political Officer, would be so bold.

"You did the right thing. I've just received a transmission from Parliament and they back our actions fully. You're a hero, Dahling."

"For killing civilians? They were dumping their cargo! They probably thought we were scrappies or pirates!"

"You're needed on the bridge, the crew needs you - the Commonwealth needs you." Clemens tone had turned cold and steely. "You must do your duty as a gentlemen and an officer of the Crown." He stood erect and stared coldly into Dahling's eyes "For God and Parliament."

"And of course the Queen?" Dahling's reply was inquisitive.

Clemens hesitated for the briefest of seconds and then nodded curtly. "Of course, God save the Queen."

Now it was Dahling's turn to pause, knowing it would antagonize the other man, but damn him and his impertinence. He'd seen the type so many times before, from proletariat to people's champion, nothing wrong with a bit of patriotism, but in a man like Clemens fueled with the ideology of the Empire and the burning desire for self-advancement, it could be a dangerous thing. Definitely not the type of man you would want standing behind you.

"God save the Queen." He downed his drink swiftly.

Clemens held his stare for a second longer and then turned and disappeared into the corridor.

Putting the tumbler down, Dahling straightened his dress jacket and headed to the door.

"And may God save us all."

Peter Johnston

TO BE CONTINUED ...

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:>a dark tomorrow_

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